the JOURNAL of the Travellers' Aid Society

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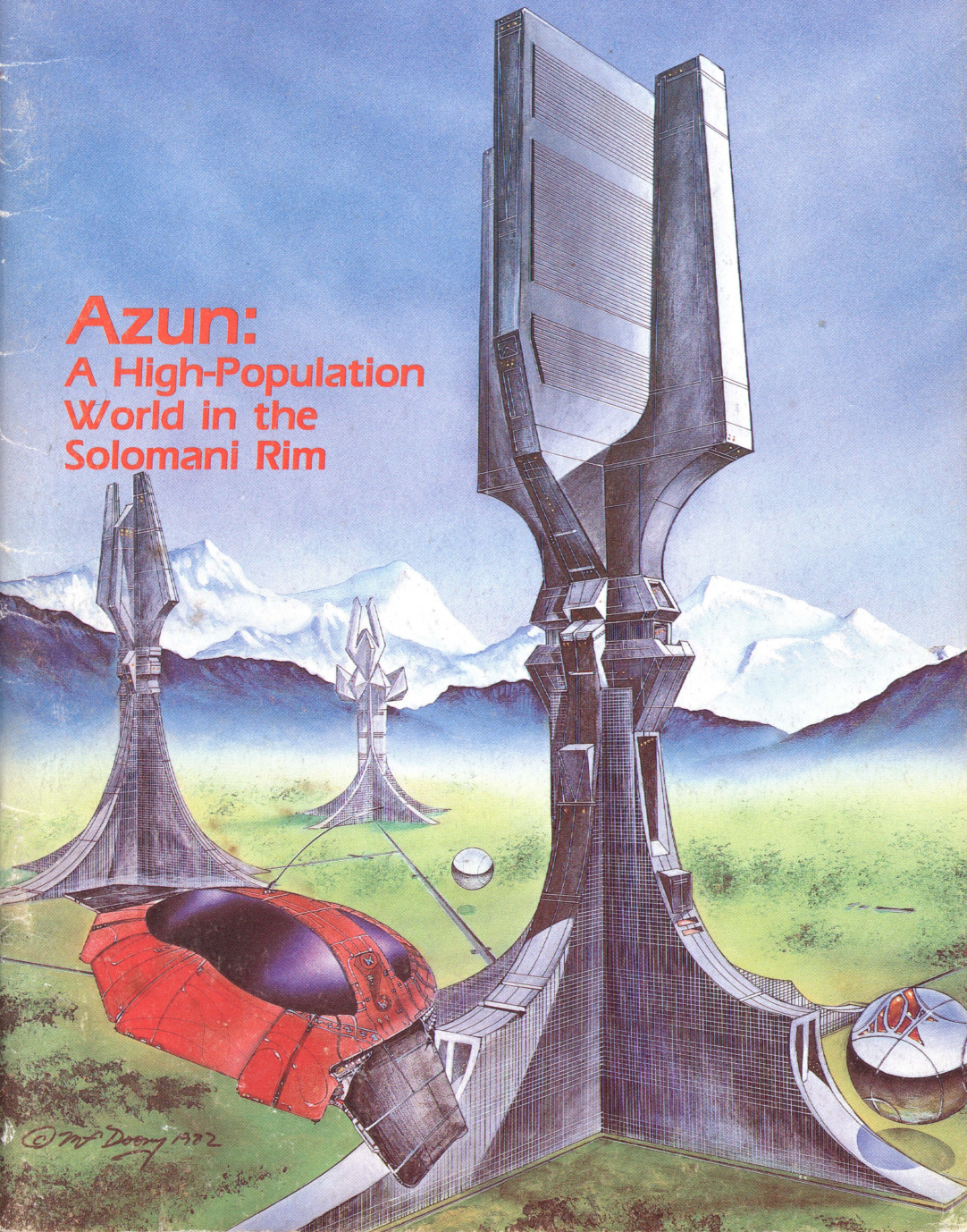
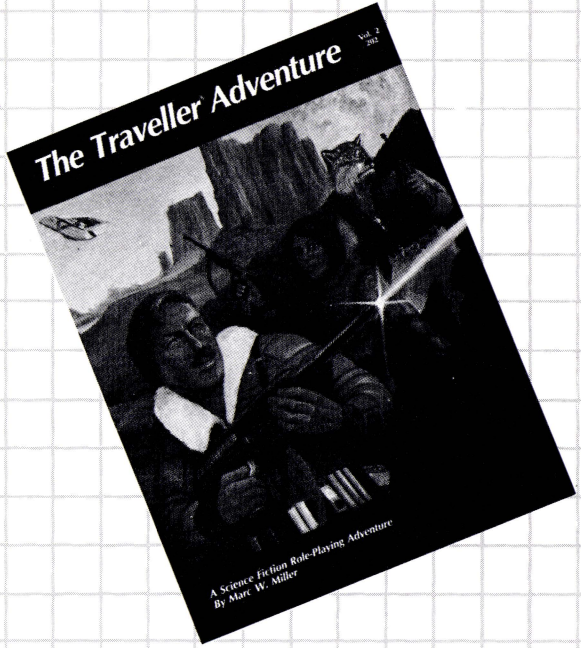
Azun: A High-Population World in the Solomani Rim



The Traveller® Adventure



When the crew of the merchant vessel *March Harrier* befriends a shaggy, wolf-like alien Vargr in the underground city of Leedor, they have no reason to suspect that they are beginning a quest for the secret of a jewelled alien ornament . . . a quest that will take them to an asteroid mining settlement, to frontier trading stations, and to dozens of exotic worlds. But the ornament is intended for more than mere decoration, and the adventuring crew is soon marked by the extra-legal security apparatus of the giant Tukera Lines megacorporation. From the teeming underground warrens of Leedor, to the cold and lonely asteroid belt and the trade routes between systems — the crew and their Vargr companion need every skill at their disposal to discover the true secret of the ornament.

The Traveller Adventure is a 128-page hardcover volume filled with all new *Traveller* action and excitement. The book is a valuable addition to any *Traveller* library, compatible with any *Traveller* rules set. $14.00

Other new *Traveller* publications are **Starter Edition Traveller**, **Library Data N-Z** (Supplement 11), **Nomads of the World-Ocean** (Adventure 9), and issue 15 of **The Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society**.

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of the Travellers' Aid Society

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Traveller is Game Designers' Workshop's registered trademark for its role-playing game of science fiction adventure set in the far future.

Dates in this issue of the *Journal* are given in accordance with an arbitrary Imperial calendar of 365 days. The date consists of a three-digit number (the current day of the year) a dash and a four-digit number (showing the current year since the founding of the Imperium).

The date of this issue is **059-1109** or the 59th day of the 1109th year of the Imperium.

The *Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society* is a science-fiction gaming magazine dedicated to **Traveller,** GDW's role-playing game set in the far future.

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WINNER— H. G. WELLS AWARD: BEST MAGAZINE COVERING ROLE-PLAYING, 1981

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Advertisers should inquire for an advertising rate card.

Submissions: We welcome articles and illustrations for the *Journal.* Please inquire before submitting manuscripts, enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope; we will send manuscript guideline and format sheets.

From the Management

Our regular subscribers will no doubt have noticed that this issue of the Journal is extremely late. There are several reasons for this, the main one being that GDW is in the process of shifting to a new typesetting system. The new system (a CompuGraphic MCS, if any of you are in the business) is a magnificent machine, capable of great feats, but it requires a great deal of study to operate (the stack of manuals is larger than some encyclopedias I have seen). As a latent computerphobiac, I have problems operating some electric typewriters, so my problems adjusting to the new system were not small (one of the keys is marked *execute,* and it was some time before I could press it without fear of dire consequences). The matter is further complicated by the fact that the manufacturer's manuals have clearly not caught up with the software, so that learning to operate the machine is an exploratory feat about on the level of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Anyway, once the teething pains are over, the new system will permit us to smooth out our typesetting procedures and tremendously speed up the whole process of getting things out. We ask that the readers of the Journal accept our wholehearted apologies for the tardiness of this issue. We will make Herculean efforts to get back on schedule.

For the first time, this issue of the Journal contains a copy of the Origins awards nomination ballot. While the final entries will be voted on by the Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts and Design (similar to the Motion Picture Academy for the Oscars), the initial nominations are open to the public at large. The closeout date for the return of the ballots is March 31, 1983, which means some of the subscribers will not receive it in time to return it before the deadline. However, we strongly urge anyone who receives their copy of the Journal in time to nominate their favorites (only the top five or six entries end up on the final ballot) if they have not already voted. The awards (the H. G. Wells Awards for role-playing and miniatures games, and the Charles Roberts Awards for board games) will have more meaning if a large number of people participate in the nomination process.

Speaking of awards, *Starter Traveller* (see workshop news, page 48) just won the Hobby Industry Association's Creative Excellence Award at the 1983 HIA show in Anaheim California. Kudos to Chris Purcell of our art department for another beautiful box-cover design.

Ordinarily, we do not discuss the essay responses on our feedback forms, but this time, we felt that the Journal-readership would be interested in the results.

The response was overwhelming against an series helping players get started. The most common reason given was that beginning players were not likely to read the Journal. A majority thought one or two articles now and then would be of help to beginning referees, however, and we will give thought to running several of these in the near future.

The majority of respondents were both players and referees. As players, the most common problems were with other players (generally rude behavior) and inexperienced or disorganized referees, both of which slow down play of the game and reduce enjoyment.

The most common problems of referees generally involved referee/player interactions. Argumentative players (those who take issue with every decision which goes against them) were a great source of friction. Another problem mentioned fairly often is the player or players with the so-called "hack & slash mentality," that is, those who try to solve every problem with gunfire.

The results of the feedback for issue 14 were as follows:

AZ: Aces & 8s	4.1
AZ: Foxhound	3.5
Police	3.8
TCS Squadron Design	3.0
High Justice	4.0
Where No Woman . . .	3.1
High Guard Optional Rules	3.9
Civilian Striker Vehicles	3.9
From The Management	3.6
Just Detected	2.9
Traveller News Service	3.5
Casual Encounter: Finger	4.2
Contact: Darrians	4.4
Ship's Locker	3.9
Bestiary	3.6
Issue overall	4.0

The winner of the free subscription (drawn from the collected feedback forms for last year) is Chris Lawson of Trenton, New Jersey. Chris wins a year's worth of the Journal.

The additional feedback questions for this issue are:

First, do you read science fiction or fantasy novels or short stories?

Second, if you referee **Traveller**, do you draw inspiration for adventures or scenarios from SF or fantasy literature?

Third, do you look to any other type of literature for inspiration in your games (such as westerns, mysteries, political thrillers, and so on)?

All readers are urged to answer these questions, either using the feedback form printed on the mailing wrapper, or on a separate sheet of paper, if you are a non-subscriber.

Traveller is available overseas through GDW distributors in the UK and Australia. We recommend that our readers in these countries obtain copies through their respective distributors.

United Kingdom: Traveller (and its additional booklets, adventures and supplements) is printed under license from GDW by Games Workshop, 27-29 Sunbeam R, Park Royal, London NW10. GW import the Journal and other GDW products.

Australia: Traveller products are imported and distributed by Jedko Games, 18 Fonceca St, Mordialloc, Vic.

JUST DETECTED

Conventions:

Ghengis Con V

June 17–19, Denver Colorado. Board games, FRP, miniatures, computer games, tournaments, dealer area, demonstrations, auction, movies. Contact Denver Gamers Association, PO Box 2945, Littleton, CO 80161.

TreasureCon I

April 29–May 1, War Bonnet Inn, Billings Montana. Science fiction convention with Steve Jackson as gaming guest of honor. Contact TreasureCon I, C/O Barjon's Books, 2516 First Ave North, Billings, MT, 59101.

CWI Con'83

May 20–22, at the Odeum in Villa Park, Illinois. FRP, SFRP, Boardgames, seminars, auction and flea market. Contact Chicago Wargaming Inc. PO Box 217, Tinley Park, IL 60477.

Play Aids:

Adventure Class Ships, vols. I & II

Two sets of ten ships between 100 and 800 tons, along with deck plans, and encounter tables to permit their use in the Spinward Marches or elsewhere. Civilian, merchantile, and military vessels are described in detail enough to permit their immediate incorporation into a campaign or scenario. Volume I includes a private yacht, a 500 ton merchant, and several small Imperial and Zhodani warships. Volume II includes two free traders, a subsidized liner, several small military vessels suitable for planetary navies, a pair of Aslan ships, and an orbital facility.

Five two-sided 11"x17" deck plans, two 16-page booklet, and 112 color counters in a box. $12.50.

Design: Craig Johnson, Scott Walschlager, Ross Babcock, Jordan Weisman.

Publisher: FASA, PO Box 6930, Chicago, IL 60680.

Fate of the Sky Raiders

The last booklet in FASA's Sky Raiders adventure trilogy.

One 60 page booklet and an 11'x17" map sheet. $6.00.

Design: J. Andrew Keith

Publisher: FASA, PO Box 6930, Chicago, IL 60680.

Games:

Helltank Destroyer

A tactical game of armored warfare, playable either with Metagaming's Helltank, or separately.

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Design: Phil Kosnett

Publisher: Metagaming, PO Box 15346, Austin, TX 78761.

Starleader: Assault

The one-to-one combat module of Metagaming's Starleader science fiction role playing game. Several scenarios are included.

One 12"x13½" map sheet, 42 diecut counters, and a 28-page rule booklet in a pocket-sized box. $3.95.

Design: Howard Thompson

Publisher: Metagaming, PO Box 15346, Austin, TX 78761.

TRAVELLER NEWS SERVICE

RHYLANOR/RHYLANOR (0306-A434934) **Date: 338-1108**

¶ The TNS has just received reports that Heya (Regina 0802) and Beck's World (Regina 0604) have fallen to Vargr forces. This information was obtained from an anonymous, highly-placed source.

¶ The office of Naval intelligence declined to comment, and Army Vice-Marshal Adam Lord Bryor could not be reached. Ω

REGINA/REGINA (0310-A788899-A) **Date: 362-1108**

¶ The office of Admiral Santanocheev announced to the press that Mirriam (Vilis 0505) and Calit (Vilis 0705) have fallen to overwhelming Zhodani forces. It was further announced that communications with the naval bases at Denotam (Vilis 0603) and Frenzie (Vilis 0306) have been cut off because of fighting in those systems.

¶ The officer reading the announcement declined to comment further, or to answer any questions on the progress of the war. Ω

REGINA/REGINA (0310-A788899-A) **Date: 021-1109**

¶ In a recorded statement to the press, the office of Admiral Lord Santanocheev announced that the Naval Base at Ghandi (Lanth 0205) is under attack by Zhodani Naval and ground forces, including several units of the elite Zhodani Consular Guard. The statement indicated that the garrison at Ghandi had recently been reinforced because of the Zhodani presence at Calit (Vilis 0705).

¶ This announcement has fueled speculation that a major Zhodani push in underway, with Rhylanor as its most likely target. If Ghandi falls, it will be a major blow to the Imperial war effort, possibly a fatal one. Ω

NEW!

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Traveller Set 1, SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE, is still available. Look for more *Traveller* sets soon . . . including Vargr, Armored Vehicles, and more.

If your hobby shop doesn't have Cardboard Heroes yet, report them to Imperial authorities, c/o our address below — and we'll send them a sample. You can also order direct from us. Send $3.50 per set (this covers postage and handling), and $3.50 per base set desired (specify black or white) to:

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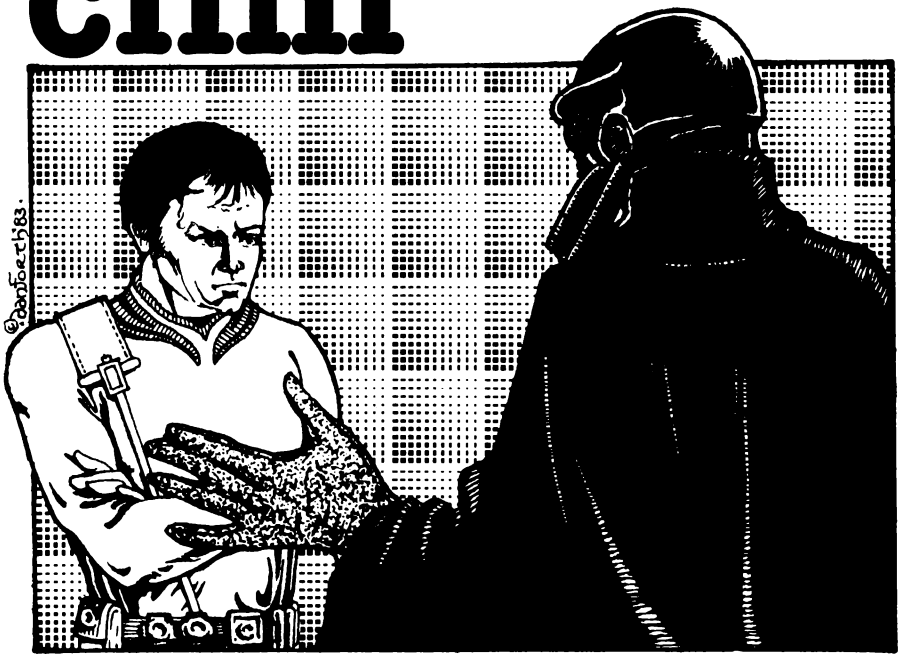
Box 18957-D **Austin, TX 78760**

chill



Amber Zone

Players' Information:

The adventurers, after responding to an initial advertisement for work, are introduced to a person wearing a breathing mask and a black cloak: a services factor of indeterminate age, sex, and even species (well, not a Droyne or a Hiver, but other than that . . .).

The team is to accompany an unspecified cargo to its destination world, see that it is delivered safely, and return to the factor with the payment, whereupon they will receive 10% of the payment as fee for service. This will amount to Cr400,000.

It is made very clear that the team is not to tamper with or open the cargo, and even more clear that if they attempt to steal the payment and flee, they will be hunted down and killed in a most unpleasant fashion.

Referee's Information:

Should the players voice the obvious suspicions, the disguised factor will tell them that the cargo is a legal commodity everywhere in the Imperium, and its import to the destination is entirely legal.

Transport will be aboard a tramp freighter of the rustbucket variety. Accommodations are second class but clean and comfortable, and the crew is friendly . . . except for the captain, who is officious and surly and will expressly deny the players any access to the hold.

Sainte Foy (B-756733-7 Amber) is a rugged mining world, ruled by a hereditary clique descended from the earliest colonists: the Primacy. The standard of living is known to be high, due to large exports of ores, but Foyans are notoriously secretive and xenophobic. Ships landing outside the Gateway Starport have been met by armed parties, resulting in the Amber classification.

Gateway is in a box canyon with mountains on all sides. The weather on

landing is cool (10° C) and pleasant, calm, with cloudy but unthreatening skies.

When the cargo is off-loaded, it will be seen to consist of 10 tons of crates, loaded on three grav pallets. The crates are covered with blue plastic insulation, and carry no information other than an address and the notices *Keep Below 0°* and *Do Not Accept if Seal is Broken.*

The purchasing agent has been delayed, so the players will have a small amount of time to explore the starport. It is inhabited entirely by offworlders with no place better to go; Sainte Foy pays port employees well, since the Foyans do not themselves have to deal with offworlders. Another result is that the port staff are very little involved in Foyan life.

The local newspaper (assuming that the players ask to see one) has a black bordered box on the front page containing several multi-digit numbers. The staff can explain that this is some kind of lottery, open only to natives, but either do not know or will not say more than this.

The players must not leave the port; non-Foyans may not cross the extrality line without a passport issued by the Primacy — and no one with such authority is present.

Eventually a train will arrive carrying the purchasing agent, Count Ibraim Radge, one of the Primacy. He is accompanied by the A (Chrysolite) Platoon of the Sainte Foy Prime Guard: thirty picked soldiers equipped to tech 9. Radge is upset, impatient, and angry; wind shear in the mountains has grounded the helicopters that were supposed to receive the cargo, which must now travel by train.

While the Count has the payment (MCr4 in a briefcase with anti-theft devices), he will refuse to hand it over, saying that the contract is for delivery to the capital, Villefoix. The players may wait at the port until Radge returns to pay them, or they may accompany him to Villefoix as additional guards; if they do, they will be paid Cr100,000 cash, which need not be shared with the factor.

The ship captain's contract has expired, and he insists upon leaving now, with the players or without them. The troops will by now have taken possession of the cargo pallets, and will not give them up. Radge will add high passages home to his offer, and if the players are hesitant, more cash (becoming more impatient and angry by the moment). The absolute limit of his offer in cash and passage tickets is Cr250,000.

Assuming that the players accept, they will board a northbound train. The cargo pallets will be stowed in a baggage car.

Foyan trains are tech 7 design (steel wheels on welded steel rails) with fusion powered locomotives recently imported. The Count's special train consists of: an engine, two baggage cars, a coach/bunk car for the soldiers, a dining car, and an office/parlor car for the Count's use. The trip to Villefoix is 2,300 km; the train's average speed is 100 kph.

Once into the mountains around Gateway, Sainte Foy's true character will reveal itself, the temperature falling to −25° C, with persistent winds of at least 10 kph, gusting to 50+, and intermittent snow.

Two and a half hours into the trip, the train will stop at what appears to be a mountain lodge. The stopover will last two hours, during which Radge will not be seen. The players may enter the lodge — at which there are no other guests — take hot showers, patronize the bar, and so forth; they will learn nothing at all about the place other than its use being reserved for the primacy.

When the Count appears at reboarding, his impatience and irritation will be

miraculously gone. When the train pulls out, the general mood will be improved; everyone will begin to relax.

If the cargo is inspected, the players will find one ton of crates has been removed. (If the team tries to keep a guard with the pallets at all times during the layover, some means must be found to distract him or her; the offer of hot soup in the dining car while a Chrysolite stands watch, for instance.) The Count will cheerfully ignore any protests over this, pointing out that he is carrying the 4 million, and demanding some good faith in return.

The train will never reach its destination (bet you guessed that already). Shortly after midnight, the tracks will be sabotaged ahead and behind, forcing an emergency stop, and a guerrilla force will launch an ambush from the trackside woods.

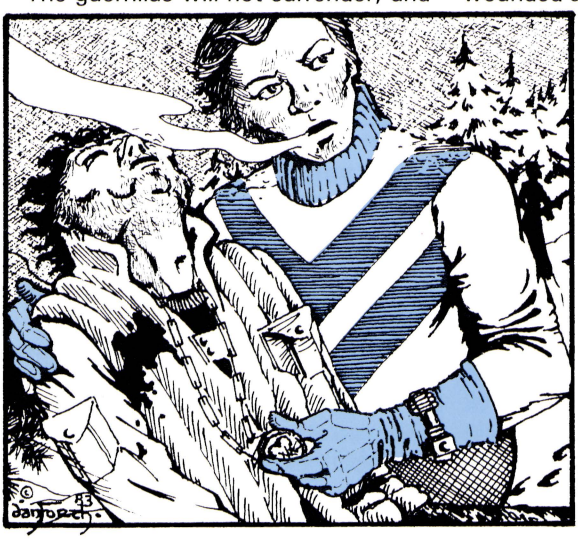
The ambushers are poorly equipped (tech 5-6, no weapons heavier than a light machine gun or single shot RPGL) and the attack will almost certainly succeed in nothing but permanently stopping the train and picking off a few of the accompanying troops.

The guerrillas will not surrender, and the Chrysolites will take no prisoners. If the players manage to capture a guerrilla, they will reveal no information and will die within an hour. If available, medical analysis will reveal that the guerrillas had all taken a hemolytic poison — before they launched their attack.

Guerrillas carry no identification, naturally, but all wear a small silver medallion, showing a heart impaled on a crown of thorns.

The Count will atempt to call for assistence, only to discover that all long range communicators (including the players', if any) have been sabotaged beyond repair.

There is only one viable option: leave the train and move cross-country. Three vehicles are available: two snowcats (4-passenger tracked vehicles with some weather protection) and a halftrack with skis (driver and passenger in an enclosed cab; 8 persons/4 tons load in the truck bed). The cargo pallets have a total capacity of 15 tons (5 each), 9 of which are taken by the crates. The pallets may be towed by a vehicle or pushed by two walking men (i.e., they are not air/rafts). The Chrysolites will not abandon their wounded under any circumstances, and will not leave their dead unless absolutely forced to (first burying their bodies, stripped of anything the guerrillas might dig up and use).



Facts: The Primacy of Sainte Foy suffer from a hereditary anemia, requiring infusions of blood every two weeks. The cargo consists of 20,000 units of frozen human whole blood, about a year's supply for the entire Primacy. Count Radge's initial nervousness was due to his being near his infusion time. The planetary lottery

taps 500 citizens each week for a unit of blood. The guerrilla movement means to destroy this system (the heart impaled on thorns is an ancient magical death symbol); their suicide squads take hemotoxin so their blood cannot be used by the Primacy (one guess as to how criminals on Sainte Foy are executed).

The situation is still more complex. The Primacy is not really a horrible, evil court of vampires they are actually rather good rulers with a peculiar and difficult problem, that they with good reason do not expect off-worlders to understand. Almost all Foyan citizens support the Primacy, the lottery (which is scrupulously fair), and the system in general; the government type should actually be listed as C.

The blood purchase is an attempt by the Primacy to stop (literally) bleeding the citizens. In the past they have had the usual Foyan objections to dealing with outsiders, and difficulty in purchasing the required quantities of whole blood (which is not common in Imperial hospitals, blood components and synthetics being used instead). Recently, however, Isoplastics Inc. (the transplantable tissues division of the huge medical cartel Mercy General) offered 20,000 units at double the usual price, and the Foyans took the offer.

What the purchasers do not know is that Isoplastics diverted several shipments of blood from regular deliveries to assemble this extra profit load. As a result, several hospitals have been left with no stock, and at least one person has died. This helps to explain the secrecy of the group's hiring factor . . .

The length of the trek across Sainte Foy's wilderness, and the number of guerrilla harassing the marchers, must be determined by the referee. The mountain range is not as friendly as Colorado Springs and not as hostile as the Tien Shan or Eigerwand north face. Search parties will be out as soon as the train misses a scheduled station; they will be armed and riding snow vehicles and (weather permitting) helicopters. Any settlements (mines, camps, etc.) will shelter the group, unless the settlement is actually a guerrilla stronghold!

Also to be determined is who sabotaged the communicators; if one of the Chrysolites is a guerrilla, the adventurers could be in serious trouble (though he might also die protecting them — remember, they're fanatics).

There is a distinct possibility that the Imperium will prosecute Isoplastics Inc. for malfeasance and murder. Mercy General itself is too powerful to be affected, but someone will have to be made a scapegoat.

They knew the job was dangerous when they took it . . .

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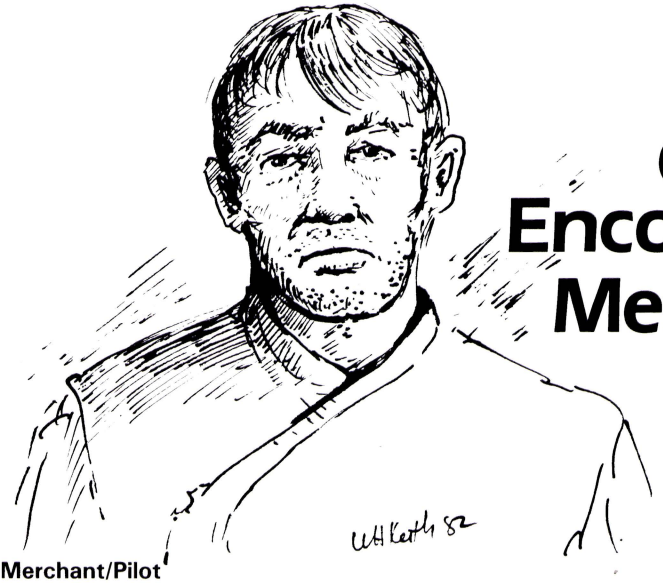

Casual Encounter: Merchant Pilot

Merchant/Pilot
Ramon SanYarvo
894773 Age 42 6 terms Cr150
Pilot-4, Navigation-2, Computer-2, Autopistol-1, Gunnery-1

A qualified second officer and master pilot, Ramon is a shabby, poorly dressed individual who, when met, will probably be unemployed. He can present excellent credentials showing years of experience handling a variety of ship types, but, considering the demand for good pilots, his appearance and lack of current work will seem suspicious. A little research into his background at any starport computer information center (consulting lists of accredited pilots, for example) will turn up the fact that Ramon has been blacklisted by a large corporation, Acreidiat Lines. The notation "untrustworthy" appears beside his name.

Ramon was once a master pilot with Acreidiat, a passenger and freight line operating in the Solomani Rim region. He was accused of having an affair with the line president's wife,a charge which he will steadfastly deny if questioned on the subject. The blacklisting has blocked all hope of employment by the major mercantile concerns in this region of space.

In the years that followed, Ramon has made his living flying for small freight companies, tramp free traders, and local shuttle services. Embittered, he turned to drink, and has been steadily deteriorating in performance, attitude, and appearance. Those small jobs have been increasingly hard to hold on to, and Ramon has become a drifter, making one or two voyages before being fired and left behind on another planet until he can find another short-lived job to keep him going.

Thin, dark, and saturnine, Ramon's appearance is seedy and his face usually silent and withdrawn, but occasionally — especially when drunk — he flys into uncontrolled fits of violent rage. He is antisocial, a solitary drunk, often to be seen in the corner of a bar drinking himself into a stupor.

Ramon may turn up as a potential hireling in response to an ad for a pilot placed by the adventurers. If so, he will (temporarily) curb his drinking in an at

tempt to reform and secure the position, presenting the best appearance he can manage. Should the party hire him either without making a check of his background (or regardless of it) he will prove to be a first class pilot, with fine instincts for ship handling and wide technical knowledge. Within 1D weeks, however, his drinking will once present a problem. At an inconvenient time of the referee's choosing, he will be found locked in the control room, drunk. This, or similar complications, can lead to interesting side adventures.

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8208 MERRIMAN
WESTLAND, MI 48185

Adventurers may also encounter Ramon as a fellow passenger aboard an Acreidiat Line starship. In this case, it is likely that he intends some act of revenge – a hijacking, a sabotage atempt, etc. He might approach the adventurers openly, offering to hire them to assist him in such an attempt (bankrolled by the line's competitors), or he may try to use them as dupes, asking them to deliver a package on board . . . a package that holds a bomb. On the other hand, it may be company officials that approach the group, hiring them to keep an eye on Ramon while he travels. Finally, adventures may be forced on the party against their wishes when they are caught in the middle after Ramon makes his move.

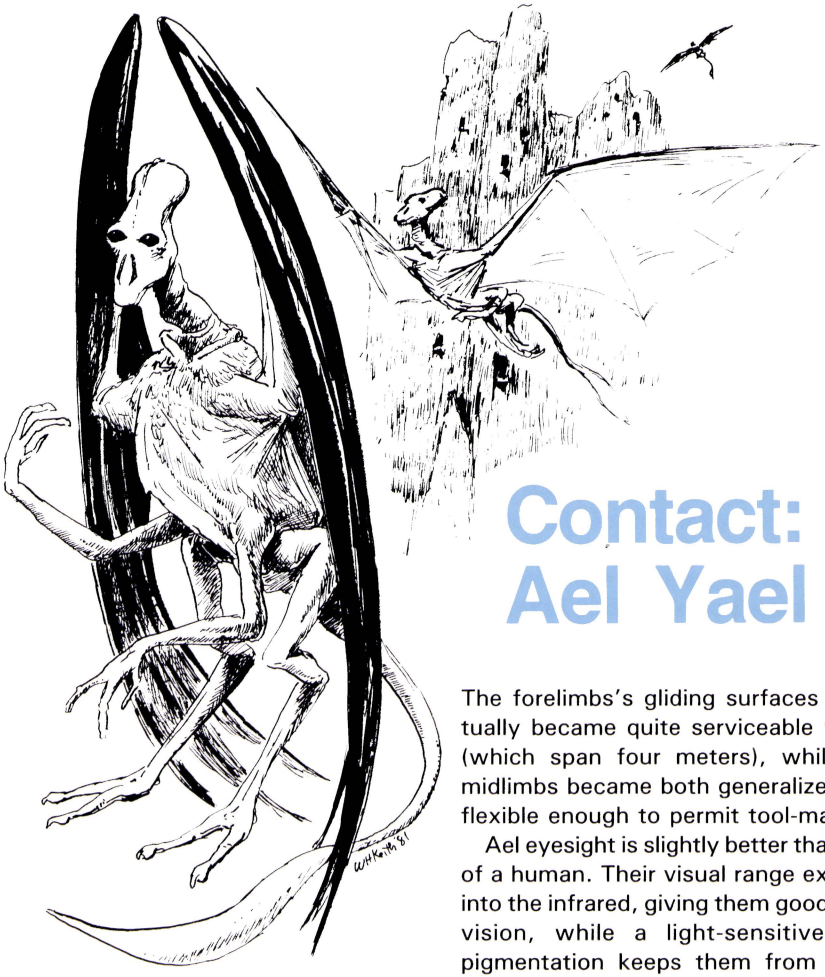
As an added complication, the referee may chose to introduce the president of the line, Alfred Dunbar, and/or his wife, to expand upon possible romantic/revenge aspects of the situation.

Dunbar is cold, businesslike, and unfriendly, with a tendency towards jealousy that is easily triggered by attention to his wife. Leila, much younger than her husband, is restless, and tired of being neglected in favor of business. Either one could be a valuable friends (or a dangerous opponent) due to their influence in local business circles.

Possible interactions between Ramon, the adventurers, and the Dunbars should be explored by the referee interested in providing an unusual adventure.

Alfred Dunbar			
65886A	Age 50	8 terms	Cr100,000
Admin-4,	Liaison-3,	Computer-3,	Interrogation-1
Leila Dunbar			
7B6899	Age 34	4 terms	Cr50,000
Gambling-2,	Steward-1,	Admin-1,	Dagger-1

—J. Andrew Keith



Contact: Ael Yael

The Ael Yael are among the few exceptions to the time-honored rule of sophontology stating that flying creatures, because of body weight and brain size, and the metabolic requirements for both, will never evolve into intelligent species.

In a universe as broad and diverse as ours, "never" is an uncertain word.

The Ael evolved from flying arboreal hexapods, which used powerful hind- and mid-legs to grasp their prey as they swooped from overhead. A carnivore's cunning, coupled with environmental pressures favored the rise of intelligence. The forelimbs's gliding surfaces eventually became quite serviceable wings (which span four meters), while the midlimbs became both generalized and flexible enough to permit tool-making.

Ael eyesight is slightly better than that of a human. Their visual range extends into the infrared, giving them good night vision, while a light-sensitive lens pigmentation keeps them from being dazzled by harsh sunlight, or brilliantly reflective surfaces.

The combination of low gravity and dense atmosphere on Jaeyelya (B-484655-4), the homeworld of the Ael, permits flight in creatures as large as they. Adults stand 1.5 meters tall, and mass 50 kg. The planet is drying out, and the once extensive forests have been vanishing during the last thousand years. Some few Ael colonies still live in treetop communes, but most inhabit the caves and fractured cliff-top rocks that overlook *Hi-yayahu lae* — the Glittering Floor. There are probably less than a

million Ael on the entire planet.

HISTORY

With the coming of the Imperium to Jaeyelya, there was new hope for the survival of this fascinating culture. Large numbers of *Ael yeyehi* (literally "updraft-riders," referring to young Aels just learning to fly) travel off-planet each year to attend Imperial schools and training programs. A number have joined the scout service in particular, and find their several racial talents useful in the exploration of new worlds. The wealth and knowledge returned to Jaeyelya this way may save this culture from extinction. The Hi-yayahu lae cliff-top commune is the guardian of Jaeyelya's primary natural resource: the Glittering Floor is a dry sea bed; vast mineral and metal deposits collected here as the sea evaporated millenia ago. Jaeyelya was first discovered by an Imperial mining corporation, which began tunneling into the Glittering Floor's salt beds looking for manganese and copper. Large numbers of local Aels were effectively enslaved by the corporation; the proud and freedom-loving autochthones fought back, and the bitter war resulted in Imperial intervention and the establishment of an Imperial protectorate on the planet. "The Government Place" is a building at the planet's class B starport facility which serves as the Aels's link with starfaring civilizations. The Aels themselves seem never to have evolved governmental systems themselves, at least none more complex than loose tribal or family structures, and welcome the off-worlder's representation. Naturally, they do have an acute distrust for mercantile corporations, and for individuals employed by such concerns. As a result, ores and minerals mined from the dry sea bed are purchased directly from the government, and the planetary mines are a government monopoly.

SOCIETY

The Ael Yael culture has a rich heritage of recited verse, poetry, and mnemonic literature. They enjoy reading the literature of Imperial peoples, which they like to rework into Aelan literature types in their free time. They are solitary, shun close contact with other races, and always seem somewhat homesick for the craggy cliffs and rock spires above the Glittering Floor. Allusions, metaphors, and similies are often expressed in terms of hunting or flight ("I grasp your meaning," "I need to look down on that idea," "My soul feels wing-clipped"). They are fierce warriors in combat; in hand-to-hand combat they can use their tail as a club, their wings as club −2, and their hindleg talons as claws −1. They cannot fire weapons from cover, however, and will leap straight up into the air when opening fire from behind cover, exposing themselves to unmodified return fire. They suffer morale checks only when fighting in an enclosed area where they cannot take flight, such as within a starship building interior, and so on.

REFEREE'S INFORMATION

Creation of Ael Yael characters for **Traveller** adventurers is the same as for human characters, with several modifications. Stats can be drawn from any source, or they can be rolled up by the referee.

Characteristic modifications are as follows: 1 is subtracted from the Ael's strength. Social level is treated as an index of the Ael's off-planet experience; a low number indicates that this may be this characters first time off Jaeyelya, and his inexperience and prejudices will be showing. A high social level shows the character has been off-planet many times, is experienced in his dealings with the Imperium, and is respected by both Imperial authorities and Ael Yael.

In rolling up characters, the preferences and prejudices of the race must be taken into account. Jaeyelya has a small militia army, but no planetary navy or marine service. Service in Imperial or subsector military units is not at all common. For attempts to join the army, navy, or marines, a DM −1 is applied to the enlistment and re-enlistment die rolls. The scout service, however, is very popular; characters receive DM+2 for scout enlistment rolls. Because of their attitudes towards commercial concerns, Ael Yael characters may never join the merchants.

The other service is unaffected by enlistment DMs. If, however, Supplement 4, *Citizens of the Imperium* is in use, give a DM+1 to the enlistment in hunter or Belter careers, a DM−1 to pirate or flyer services, and forbid entirely enlistment as nobles. All other career types are handled normally.

Mustering out benefits are received as usual, except that cash benefits must be divided between the individual and the Planetary Development Fund. The character receives only 10% of the amount indicated by the table. Material benefits are not affected, only cash.

When an Ael is a part of an adventuring party, the referee should give favorable DMs to the group for achieving surprises, and for spotting potential threats, distant buildings, or artifacts. This reflects the Ael's keen eyesight.

Aels never developed sophisticated tools or weapons. They now have a few projectile weapons based on Imperial designs, but have never been comfortable with mechanisms that kill at a distance. They can handle Imperial weapons, but suffer an automatic DM−2 when rolling to hit to reflect the problems they have in handling or firing a weapon not designed for their hands. When attacking, they prefer to leap several meters into the air and hover (when gravity and atmosphere permit them flight), firing wildly all the while. They have difficulty firing from cover, both psychologically and anatomically.

Aels can fly on worlds of size 6 or less with dense atmospheres. In standard atmospheres, or on worlds of sizes 7 or 8, they can glide from high elevations to lower ones, hover for a few seconds, or ride the updrafts that can be found alongside cliffs or within canyons. They require breathing apparatus to live on worlds with thin atmospheres, and, of course, flight is impossible for them in such environments. Vacc suits have been designed for Aels, but they can wear these only by folding their wings. Generally, Aels in **Traveller** will be NPCs. Should players wish to assume the character of an Ael, they should remember that Ael psychology is influenced strongly by several factors.

First, travelling Ael feel they have a responsibility to the entire Ael Yael race. Except for a small living allowance, everything they earn is turned over to a planetary trust fund administered by the protectorate government on Jaeyelya. When an Ael signs up for a job, it will be with the good of the race in mind, and how they might be benefited.

A second factor is a deep-seated distrust (sometimes a hatred) of corporations and businesses throughout the Imperium, especially those involved in mining or planetary exploitation. Experienced Aels (with social levels of 9 or more) will understand that not all big business interests involve murder and genocide, but they will never trust merchant characters unreservedly. They will join an enterprise sponsored by merchants or corporations only if they see very large rewards for their planet in accepting such a job. If they find themselves in a situation where a culture is being exploited or victimized, they will without

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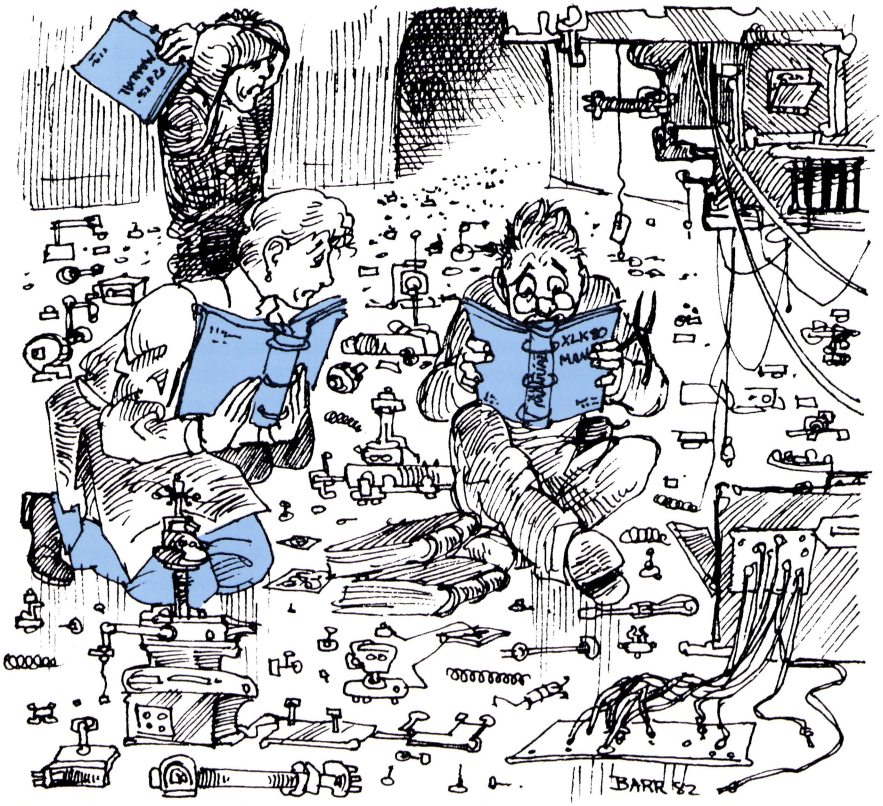
Starship Malfunctions



Some days, everything seems to go wrong. With pursuing vessels only a hair's-breadth behind you, your ship races beyond the 100-diameter limit. Feverishly, you load your destination tape and activate the jump drive. As the power plant makes grinding sounds, and red lights flash all over your control panel, you remember that your last maintenance check was over two years ago . . .

Starships are complex technological devices, and are subject to occasional mechanical difficulties, like any other complex device. This is especially true if they are not properly maintained. Malfunctions in the drives and power plant are covered in the basic rules. This article gives an optional means by which a referee may add a little more detail to the process.

The sequence is roughly as follows: The referee determines, by the method outlined below, that one or more systems on the ship have malfunctioned or completely failed. The referee then reveals any symptoms which may be appropriate (depending on a number of factors). These symptoms could be anything from the jump drives failing to operate to the air smelling a little musty or the water tasting funny. The symptoms will guide the players to examine possible sources of the problem. Once the problem is located, that system can be repaired and tested to determine if the problem persists. If it does, continued work is necessary. Usually, the problem can be handled by the ship's engineer with the tools and spare parts normally carried aboard ship. In the case of a major malfunction, however, the best that

can be hoped for is that the temporary repairs can be made which will last long enough to get to a shipyard capable of dealing with the damage on a more permanent basis.

Note that it is possible to have more than one problem represented by a single symptom.

FREQUENCY

For any given starship, the referee must determine the chances for a malfunction to occur. This may be done according to the table accompanying this article, or may be decreed according to the referee's judgement.

MALFUNCTION TABLE

Die Roll:	*Commercial Ship:*	*Private Ship:*	*Military Ship:*
1	—	—	—
2	—	—	—
3	—	—	—
4	—	—	—
5	—	—	—
6	—	—	—
7	—	—	—
8	—	—	—
9	—	malf	—
10	malf	malf	—
11	malf	dbl	malf
12	dbl	crit	dbl
13	crit	crit	crit

A result of 13+ is considered to be 13.

If this malfunction table is used, it should be consulted once per week, regardless of whether the ship is in use or not. Die modifications may be imposed for different circumstances, or for the length of time since the last overhaul.

Columns are provided for commercial, military, and private ships. It is assumed that military ships are the best maintained, commercial ships next, and private vessels least well maintained. Modifiers can be applied for a number of factors (such as extra care given to maintenance, battle damage, or negligence) at the referee's discretion. A system which malfunctions at any time remains that way until it either gets worse or is repaired.

Three results are possible on the table. *Malfunction* (malf) indicates that a symptom has appeared, *double* (dbl) indicates two symptoms, and *critical* (crit) indicates three symptoms have appeared in the same day.

The referee should then choose a malfunction or malfunctions that will result in the correct number of symptoms. Note that it is possible for one or more of the symptoms to be undetected by the players under certain conditions, and this can result in false diagnoses.

Some symptoms will only become noticeable in certain circumstances. For example, jump drive failure will definitely become apparent if the jump drive is activated, but will not necessarily be noticed during normal non-jump operations. Results of the malfunction table should be kept secret, and revealed to the players only when appropriate.

It will naturally occur to the players that periodic maintenance checks will help discover malfunctions before they can do major damage. A full inspection of all ship's systems will take the entire engineering staff of the ship one full day to complete. For the chances of discovering the source of the malfunction, see below.

MALFUNCTION DESCRIPTIONS

Malfunctions take on a variety of guises.

Jump Drive Failure: When activated, the jump drive does not work. *Symptom*— Jump-drive inoperative.

Misjump: Use of unrefined fuel, or activating the jump too deep in a gravity well has caused a misjump. Conditions for this failure are as described in the

basic rules. This problem is not listed on the table, since there is nothing to repair. *Symptom*— Misjump.

Maneuver Drive Failure: When activated, the maneuver drive fails to function. *Symptom*— Maneuver-Drive inoperative.

Maneuver Drive Malfunction: When activated, the maneuver drive operates erratically. For each turn of operation, throw 1D−2. The resulting number indicates the percent function of the maneuver drive in quarters (0=0% acceleration, 1=25% acceleration, 2=50% acceleration, 3=75% acceleration, 4=100% acceleration. *Symptom*— Reduction in acceleration, as indicated above.

Power Plant Failure: When activated, the power plant fails to function. Life support can operate off batteries, but neither the jump drive no the maneuver drive can function. *Symptoms*— Jump drive inoperative, Maneuver drive inoperative, life support and computer using emergency power.

Power Plant Malfunction: The power plant functions erratically. When attempting a jump, roll 2D. On an 8− the jump is successful, on a 9-11 the drive fails, and on a 12 there is a misjump. When attempting to use the maneuver drive, roll for erratic function as described under maneuver drive malfunction. Life support and the computer will continue to function (on emergency power or regular power depending on the state of the power plant— roll 2D for 8+ once per turn for the power plant to be malfunctioning during that turn). *Symptoms*— Any symptom described in the above entry.

Computer Failure: The computer does not function. No programs may be run and life support ceases to function. *Symptoms*—Life support failure, and any symptom described in any other entry.

Computer Malfunction: This also represents controls and consoles other than those located on the bridge. A malfunctioning computer can show the symptoms of any number of other malfunctions. This malfunction is due to a hardware failure. For programming failures, see the rules on computer programming in *Best of the Journal,* pp 24-25, or The **Traveller** Book, pp 70-71. *Symptoms*— Any symptom described in any other entry.

Life Support Failure: The life support system fails to operate. This is due to a failure of a primary component in the system, not a lack of power. Divide the tonnage of the ship's main compartment by the number of people on board not in cold sleep, and divide the resulting number by 12. This is the number of days until those not in cold sleep die of lack of air. Water, food, and heat will not be depleted before the air is depleted. *Symptoms*— No air circulation, no heat.

Life Support Malfunction: One or more portions of the life support system have malfunctioned. There is no chance of death, but life has become extremely uncomfortable. To determine the number of portions malfunctioning, roll one die and divide by two, rounding up. To determine the malfunctioning portion, roll one die. A result of 1-2 indicates a malfunction of the air recirculation system, 2-3 a malfunction of the water purifier, 5-6 a malfunction of the food preservation system.

For each portion of the life support system which malfunctions, reduce the endurance of all people aboard not in cold sleep by one until the problem is repaired. *Symptoms*— As described in this entry.

Fuel Tank Rupture: The fuel tanks have been punctured, and fuel has leaked off into space. *Symptom*— Cloud of gas and ice crystals around the ship for a short time after the rupture occurs, computer indicates low fuel in tanks,

jump drive failure when jump drive is activated.

Scoops Inoperative: The vessel's fuel scoops are clogged or blocked in some fashion. *Symptoms*— Jump drive failure when jump drive is engaged, computer indicates low fuel in the tanks.

Turret Inoperative: One or the ship's turrets (if the ship has any) fails to function. *Symptom*— when activated, the turret in question fails to work.

Turret Malfunction: One of the ship's turrets (if the ship has any) fails to work properly. Apply a DM of −8 for that particular turret's "to hit" roll. *Symptom*— Jerky or sluggish turret traverse.

Laser, Missile, Sandcaster Inoperative: One of the ship's weapons (if the ship has any) fails to fire. These weapons are designed so that a malfunction causes the entire weapon to fail. *Symptom*— When activated, the weapon fails to fire (other weapons in the turret will fire unless they too are defective).

DIAGNOSIS AND REPAIR

The table below indicates the skills needed to locate a specific malfunction, the die rolls needed to effect temporary and permanent repairs, and skill DMs for these rolls. It takes one person 2D hours to investigate a single system and find a problem. If the malfunction is not located, the full 12 hours is taken. A person cannot find a problem that does not exist, but should not be discouraged from looking for it.

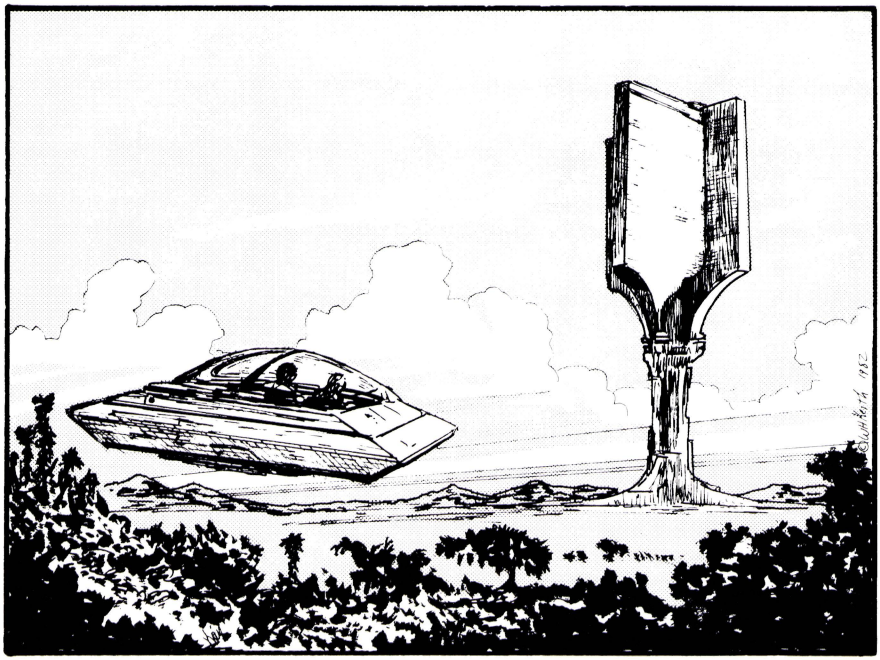
Once a problem has been found, only one roll per day (24 hours) may be made to attempt to repair it. If a temporary repair is achieved, one roll may be made

continued on page 43

MALFUNCTION REPAIR TABLE

Problem:	*Die Roll to Locate:*	*Temp. Repair:*	*Perm. Repair:*	*Skill DMs:*
J-drive Failure	8+	10+	—	+eng
J-drive Malfunction	8+	10+	13+	+eng
M-drive Failure	8+	10+	—	+eng
M-drive Malfunction	8+	10+	13+	+eng
Power Plant Failure	8+	10+	—	+eng
Power Plant Malfunction	8+	10+	13+	+eng
Computer Failure	9+	10+	10+	+comp +elec
Life Support Inoperative	4+	6+	10+	+mech
Life Support Malfunction	6+	8+	12+	+mech
Fuel Tank Rupture	6+	6+	—	+mech
Scoops Inoperative	8+	8+	—	+mech
Turret Inoperative	8+	8+	10+	+mech
Turret Malfunction	8+	10+	10+	+mech
Laser, Missile Sandcaster Inoperative	10+	10+	—	+elec +mech

Abbreviations: +eng = DM +2 per level engineering skill; +mech = +1 per level mechanical skill; +comp = +1 per level computer skill; +elec = +1 per level of electrical skill; — = no repair possible. Note: J-o-T permits DM +1 per level for any problem.



The Drannixa Gambit

Players' Information:

During a stopover at the orbital starport over Azun, the adventurers are contacted by Arthur Wilcox, who identifies himself as head of the Council on Commercial Development for Elskay, one of Azun's arcology cities. He needs a group of offworlders for a risky but vitally important task. There is a specific need for individuals with expertise in medicine

Amber Zone

(level 2+), electronics (level 1+), and computer (level 3+). If the group can meet these qualifications, and is still willing to talk, Wilcox will arrange to convey them to his office in Elskay to discuss details of his offer.

Wilcox has been in charge of negotiating a contract between Elskay and an offworld corporation, Farmines, LIC. This contract involves a joint investment for the development of mines on Azun's smaller moon, Bran. By the terms of the agreement, Elskay would receive a large portion of the ore extracted in these mines for processing, which will give the city a needed economic boost. Another city, Drannixa, has also been attempting to land the Farmines contract, but Elskay's offers have been better received. The final contract is to be reviewed and signed in three day's time.

A complication has arisen. Drannixa has obtained a hold over Wilcox, which they are threatening to use if he does not arrange to ruin Elskay's chances with Farmines (by making a last-minute change in terms that can easily be outbid by Drannixa). The rival city has in custody Sharon Wilcox, daughter of the councillor, and they are prepared to

charge her with conspiracy to poison Drannixa's food processing systems.

Wilcox explains that his daughter (much to his chagrin) has long belonged to a utopian protest group which has members in several cities, and claims that the only way to live is to reject the technological dependence of the cities (as much as is possible, considering the world's atmosphere) and return to the soil. The group has never amounted to much, and Sharon's involvement was always seen by her father as a rather harmless kind of protest and rebellion against parental authority.

Sharon knew of the plot by her fellow utopians, but was not directly involved. When the actual saboteurs were captured, they identified many other members of their organization, and Sharon was arrested. Her father's identity was soon discovered, and the blackmail plan hatched. Public opinion being what it is, Sharon is sure to be executed for her supposed involvement in the crime.

Wilcox cannot betray his city, but he loves his daughter very much. He has selected another alternative — hire a team of adventurers to get into Drannixa, free Sharon, and wipe clean the computer files holding the fabricated evidence against her. The group will be given certain essential items to make it possible to penetrate Drannixa's security systems. Upon completion of the mission, they will be given Cr15,000 each, plus high passage to Coriolanus, a commercial center where the group can expect to make connections for almost any other important world in the region.

Referee's Information:

Each member of the party will be given a small (1 gram) tracer tuned to identify the individual as a resident of Drannixa. This will enable them to move about more freely than visitors, although specific codes allowing access to high-security areas are not available. Weaponry is not advisable, since spot checks by security on everyone (including residents) are fairly frequent, and all weaponry is strictly forbidden.

Once in Drannixa, the group must figure out a way to enter the detention section of the administrative levels, locate Sharon Wilcox, and avoid notice in doing so. One option might be to get one or more of the group in trouble and taken to the detention area; the remainder could then pose as worried friends and apply for a pass to see the captive(s). There are other solutions, any one of which may be workable.

Once they find Sharon Wilcox, it is vital that her implanted ID tracer be removed (this takes medical-2 electronics-1, and 2D minutes); a spare tracer like the ones carried by the adventurers can then be provided.

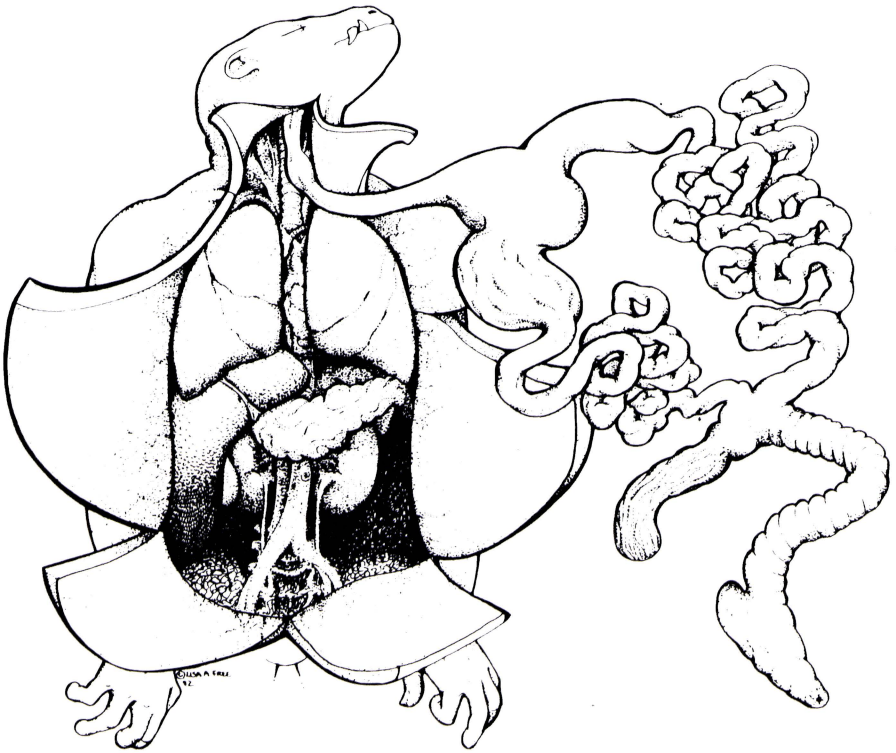
To wipe out the evidence assembled against her, the adventurers must discover the correct computer file and erase it. This is not an easy task; it requires a modified roll of 15+ on 2D to locate. One roll may be made for every five minutes spent at a computer console looking for the file. Once located, the file may be erased automatically.

The referee should bear in mind the tight security procedures in effect inside the city; once security personnel become aware of the adventurers and their mission, they will react with great speed. It is essential that the party strike quickly, and not raise the alarm before they find the girl. Once her tracer is removed and goes dead (normal tracers won't function when removed), the alarm will be raised regardless. There is a chance that using the computer will trigger an alarm (any result of 2 on the locate file roll will set off the alarm and lock the terminal).

Escape depends upon successfully

continued on page 35

TOTALLY REVEALING!



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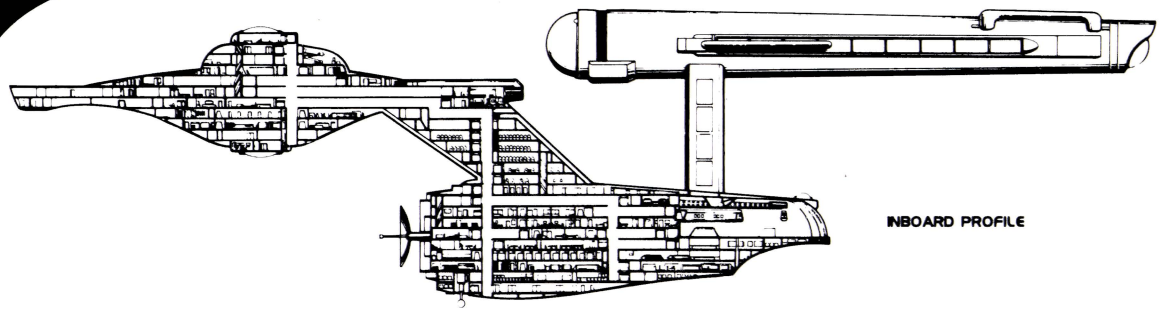

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A natural part of **Traveller** is the creation of new character types for use in adventures, situations, histories and scenarios. Such a new character type may be intended for a specific player who has indicated a desire for a secret agent career, or it may be used for a patron encounter which calls for a news reporter who will accompany the group on an adventure, to give only two of many possible examples.

This character generation system creation system is a simple method for creating a customized character generation system and keeping track of the details for later use.

A home-grown character generation system should use the generation systems provided in Basic **Traveller** and Supplement 4. One or both of these booklets should be on hand when filling out the form for the system you create.

PROCEDURE

Each numbered block on the form calls for specific information which is then used in the generation procedure.

Imagination is a requirement of the referee when producing a character generation system. There is no series of die rolls to help things along, referees are on their own. The more imaginative referees are, the more interesting and realistic the character will be. Referees should take care to insure that their systems do not produce "super-characters", characters with large numbers of skills or ludicrously high skill levels.

It may be necessary to fill out a draft form or two in order to get the information just right. Once the system satisfies you, a file copy should be made for permanent reference. Make each entry clearly and cleanly, for ease of reading.

Completed forms may be used for character generation just as would the tables in Book 1 or Supplement 4.

TAS FORM 41

Each of the individual numbered blocks on the form is explained below:

1. Date of Preparation: Note the date (to help track versions of the system.

2. Character Type: Note the specific type of character to be generated (examples: bounty hunter, lawyer, reporter, police officer).

3. Prior Service Table: The die rolls for enlistment, draft, survival, position (equivalent to commission), promotion, and return (equivalent to re-enlistment) must be created. Each throw is on two dice, unless you decide and note differently. Die modifications based on personal characteristics (if any) should be entered (example: Enlistment 6+, DM +1 if social 9+).

It is also possible to base DMs on other criteria such as number of terms served, possession of certain skills, or rank.

4. Table of Ranks: List the various ranks for the character type. Such ranks should reflect the levels of responsibilities for the career and range from 1 to 6 in level (examples: Captain, secretary, assistant manager, expert, team leader).

5. Acquired Skills Tables: Four tables labelled Personal Development, Service Skills, Education, and Advanced Education are available. Existing skills, or newly defined skills may be used in these tables. Personal development allows skills which contribute to personal or physical improvement. Service skills are typically received by ordinary individuals within the character type. Education and advanced education skills are normally

Continued on page 30

CHARACTER GENERATION DATA

1. Date of Preparation

2. Character Type

3. Prior Service Table

Prior Service Table

Enlist ☐

DM ☐ if

DM ☐ if

Draft ☐

Survival ☐

DM ☐ if

Position ☐

DM ☐ if

Promo ☐

DM ☐ if

Return ☐

4. Table of Ranks

Table of Ranks

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

5. Acquired Skills Tables

Acquired Skill Tables

Personal Development	*Service Skills*
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.

Education	*Advanced Education*
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
Restrictions:	Restrictions:

6. Skill Eligibility

7. Automatic Skills

8. Character Type

9. Benefit Tables

Benefit Tables

Material Benefits	*Cash Benefits*
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
Restrictions:	Restrictions:

10. Benefit Descriptions

11. Skill Descriptions

12. Career Restrictions

continued from page 27
available to more intelligent, educated, or advanced members of the character type.

Restrictions may be placed on the use of the education and advanced education tables.

6. Skill Eligibility: This block indicates when a character is allowed to gain a skill. Conventionally, characters are allowed two skills the first term, one skill in each additional term, and one skill upon commission or promotion. Careers without ranks often receive two skills per term instead. Exercise good judgement in setting skill eligibility.

7. Automatic Skills: Many careers will provide automatic skills to individuals on enlistment, achieving a certain rank, or time in service. Skills should be noted here. Note any such skills in this block. Not all careers will have automatic skills.

8. Character Type: For convenience, repeat the character type in this block on the reverse of the form.

9. Benefit Tables: This set of tables (labelled Material Benefits and Cash Benefits) indicates what can be received by characters in this type of career when they muster out. Benefits not otherwise explained should be described in block 10 (examples: surgical instruments, gun, vacc suit, surveyor's instruments). Caution should be exercised here so as to not upset play balance by giving the players too much equipment or cash.

Additionally, restrictions on the characters eligibility to receive these benefits upon mustering out (if any) should be described here.

10. Benefit Description: Any material benefits called for in block 9 should be noted and described here. Describe what the benefit consists of, what is masses, and how much it would cost to replace.

11. Skill Description: Any skills required for this career type and not described elsewhere defined here.

12. Career Restrictions: Any restrictions on the career should be noted here. Such restrictions may involve conflicts of nationality or race with the intended career, or various physical restrictions. (Examples: Bounty hunter not available to Zhodani characters, Darrian Navy career not available to non-Darrian citizens).

INVENTING NEW CHARACTERS

Creation of good character generation systems is not an easy task. Here are some tips:

Make the character work for skills and benefits. Survival and career progress should never be too easy. If specific skills are highly desirable, they should require an appropriate effort to attain. Look at a realistic counterpart of the career involved and pattern the skills and benefits on it.

Don't go overboard. Keep everything in perspective. A character who gets all the skills, always lives, and then gets great benefits and a huge fortune is not much of a challenge to play, and will upset a campaign's balance. For each benefit, skill, or monetary reward, the individual should have to pay, in chances taken, in years aged, in choices made.

THE FORM

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— *Marc W. Miller*

TCS Squadron Design II

Other things being equal, the better the defenses of the ships of a squadron, the more survivable that squadron will be. Unfortunately, other things are not equal. Defense is not free. Like all economic phenomena, it produces diminishing returns and entails increasing costs.

COSTS

Keep in mind that the components of any ship are either tonnage-based or percentage-based. For instance drives of a given rating occupy a stated percentage of a ship's displacement; main weaponry of a given rating occupies a fixed tonnage. In general, the displacement of a ship built to specific parameters can be expressed as $M = F/1 - V$, where M = minimum ship displacement in tons, F = total fixed tonnage requirements, and V = total percentage required by variable components, expressed as a proportion.

If you take the time, you will find a very high correlation between the size of a ship and its cost, irrespective of its armament. In other words, big ships cost more money, and the relationship between size and cost is nearly cost = A x displacement + B. Defenses such as armor and agility take up percentages of ship displacement. For instance, maintaining agility-6 requires, at tech 14, 35.58% of the ship's displacement. Of course, as the denominator of a fraction increases, the value of the fraction increases hyperbolically.

At the same time, the increased defensive benefit to be derived from piling on more and more of a defensive parameter declines. Consider, for instance, using agility as a defense against missiles. The point is most clearly illustrated by using factor-3 missiles as an example. Against an agility-0 ship, 6+ is required to hit; 26/36 fires will strike home. Against an agility-1 ship, with 7+ required to hit, 21 hits will result — a marginal difference of 5/36. If agility is increased to 2, so that 8+ hits, there will be 15 hits in 36 fires — a marginal difference of 6/36. So far, we find increasing returns to agility. However, when agility is increased to 3, so that 9+ hits, there will be 10/36 hits — a marginal increase of only 5. Continued equal increases in agility (which drive up the size and cost of the ship hyperbolically) produce even smaller increases in the defensive benefit.

The same holds true of armor. While increasing the amount of armor always reduces the amount of damage a ship

will take, each added level of armor produces a smaller increase in defensive benefit.

ARMOR

Nevertheless, one can be perverse about armor. Presenting an opponent with a line of battle consisting solely of armor factor 18 or so ships is bound to distress an opponent who does not have a superabundance of big meson guns. In fact, the possibility of encountering such a fleet should be enough to make the designer think twice about going overboard with very large particle accelerators; even the largest particle accelerators can do little more than scorch a heavily-armored rock. These rocks, however, cannot be overlarge. They can afford to sacrifice agility; indeed, if the fleet is not going to consist of anything but a dozen rocks, the ships must sacrifice agility. Contestants should also be aware that the day of the "super-rock" is over since the entry of fleets which rely on L-Hyd jump tanks to meet the required jump parameter has been prohibited. The requirement of internal fuel tankage and jump-4 will occupy at least 57% of the ship; achieving even armor-15 (using a planetoid hull and 12 factors of armor) would take up 90% of the ship just to fabricate the hull and outfit it with jump drives, minimal power plant, and fuel. This sort of ship will simply not fly in 1983.

The amount or armor you employ is, of course, subject to experimentation. Never overlook, however, the fact that having too few ships of the line will expose you to massacre at the hands of a fleet which is heavy on meson guns (there's usually at least one pion fanatic at each tournament). Without giving away the secret of how much armor to put on a ship, you should be aware of certain qualitative changes that result from increased armor:

1) At armor 4+, nuclear missiles will not induce critical hits, nor will big particle accelerators.

2) At armor 11+, the maneuver drives are safe from surface explosions.

3) At armor 12+, and for armor 3−, nuclear missiles are the most effective way to reduce ships; in the former case, by scraping off weapons; in the latter by incinerating the ship; at intermediate levels of armor, conventional missiles are invited.

AGILITY

Agility is the only defensive measure which is good against all forms of attack. However, it is especially subject to the squeeze between cost and marginal effectiveness.

Selecting an agility for your ships depends in very large measure on what sort of ships you expect to draw. Against large meson guns, agility produces diminishing returns above ag = 3. Against large particle accelerators, it does not produce diminishing returns. Against factor-9 missiles, diminishing returns appear at greater than ag = 5, and so on.

Another consideration to be balanced against the foregoing is the meson double-up, which we discussed in Part I. Increased agility may produce susceptability to double fires from meson weaponry, due to the smaller number of ships which will be present in a high-agility fleet.

SCREENS

We have already alluded to the utility of nuclear dampers; they are generally so effective against ships with armor factors less than 11, the conventional missile is better able to inflict damage than the nuclear missile. Dampers, however, require a considerable investment in power plant, which is especially burdensome in smaller ships. A 1000

ton ship requires power plant-6 just to operate the damper. No ship of the line is worthy of the name unless it has dampers and meson screen, however, the net investment in power plant required to operate these is, for a 10,000 ton ship, less than 5%; but it makes the difference between being survivable and being a sitting duck.

CONFIGURATION

Configuration is a very important defense against the meson gun. Although very large meson guns (factor R, S, and T) will slice through just about anything, the mid-range and small weapons are highly sensitive to configuration. Although the ideal configuration (buffered planetoid) is no longer practical, a needle configuration gives nearly as satisfactory results. The use of configuration nearly squares the effectiveness of a meson screen in keeping out meson gun attacks.

Accordingly, every ship of the line of battle should have meson screens, nuclear damper, and a needle configuration. Each of these contributes to the survival of the ship at a rate greater than its expense; this may readily be verified by designing opposing vessels which are identical in their design parameter (the main weapon, agility, jump, armor, and proportion of secondary weapons to hull displacement) but differ in their configuration and screens. The fleet without screens and using cheap configurations (e.g., close structure) will be more numerous, but it will be found to go up in smoke with appalling speed.

WEAPONS

Yes, weapons are defensive; this goes for more than just sandcasters and repulsors, which are expressly defensive. If a ship is really a flying meson gun, it is susceptible to being reduced very quickly to uselessness by missile fire. "Filling up the USP," on the other hand, means that seven times as many weapon hits will be required to produce any level of damage on the main weapon.

TACTICS

The best tactics in the universe will not salvage a design error. If your fleet lacks meson guns, and your opponent's line of battle has armor-19, you have lost, and that is that. There are actually two tactical decisions to be made in each round of combat; one of these is mechanical, the other judgmental.

Mechanics: Once the lines of battle have been formed, the allocation of fires is simply a matter of maximizing results. There is no reason why this function could not be performed by a computer. As we have noted before, it is a matter of simple mathematics to compute the number of fires necessary to produce a given result, such as producing enough weapon-n hits to scrape every weapon off the surface of the target hull.

There are a few general rules of thumb regarding the allocation of fires. The first is the principle of avoiding redundancy. If you are shooting at a large, armor-0 ship with a factor-S particle accelerator, it is a waste to throw missiles at it; you will hit, and the ship will incinerate itself very satisfactorily, thank you, without the need of adding nukes to the fireball.

The principle of redundancy avoidance also indicates that given a choice between spreading meson fires over a large number of ships or concentrating fire on a small number, the largest possible number of ships should be engaged. If there are twenty ships in the enemy line of battle, and you have twenty meson guns, each enemy ship should be fired at once, rather than doubling-upon fewer ships. Note that a meson gun of factor-J+ will produce ten interior explosions if it hits and penetrates; this is a

statistical event, with the result that a ''fuel tank shattered'' result is guaranteed. This is a kill.

Further, note that in firing secondary weapons, dispersal is the rule rather than the exception. While it may be desirable to concentrate fires on a few enemy ships and put them out of action, superior results will generally be achieved by so spreading-out missile fires that all of the opponents main weapons are partially reduced.

Judgement: The question is, should the ship be placed in the line of battle at any given point? This carries with it a second, correlative question: should a reserve be kept? These considerations are of crucial importance when the clash is between battleships, i.e., big, heavily-armored ships with large meson guns. The premature commitment of a battleship to the line of battle will expose it to the danger of being worn down by missile bombardment, to the point that it cannot stand up to its opposition. I do not pretend to have an answer to this infinitely interesting question, but the existence of this wrinkle has some very important implications for fleet designers.

The most startling facet of space combat in the **Traveller** universe is the suicidal nature of very large ships: whether the ship displaces one million or one thousand tons, it will be equally dead if a factor-J+ meson gun strikes home. The solution, for those who simply must have large battleships, is to ''predigest'' the enemy line of battle with a line of missile-firing craft. Under such a battleplan, the battleships do not make their appearance until after the enemy meson guns have been reduced to a point at which they cannot penetrate the BB's screens.

This requires the design of a class of ships to fill the ''pre-digesting'' role, and be capable of standing up to enemy fire for an extended period of time. They must be fairly agile, and well-armored. They must also be numerous; the best defense against the spinal meson gun is to rely on a large number of small hulls, since each meson gun can only engage one target.

The result is a seesaw battle. Once the battle plan becomes evident to the opponent, he may be expected to withdraw his ships of the line to prevent their erosion. The danger for both players in this stage of the battle is that the line of battle will break. Indeed, when both side's ships of the line are held in reserve, the battle between the small stuff may be come decisive.

In such battles, the decision will go to the player who correctly out-guesses his opponent without making a grievous miscalculation. By popping the ships of the line in and out of reserve, the opponent may be tempted to occasionally do the same; should he fail to do so, the battle between the missile ships will certainly become unbalanced.

At all times, a clear view must be kept of the ability of one or the other side to break the opposing line of battle. Since at the time the battleships in the reserve will be exposed to fire, it does relatively little good to break the enemy line unless one's own ships of the line are in a position to fire and thereby destroy a large portion of the enemy's firepower. The admiral who would succeed must correctly predict the turn on which he can break through with the added firepower of his reserve. If correctly predicted, so that the line does not, in fact, break, then one's own ships of the line have been exposed to enemy fire and enemy planning before thay can inflict a body blow on the enemy fleet; if the line breaks prematurely, a golden opportunity will have been lost, and the battle will turn on the ability of the friendly missile line to digest the enemy line of battle. Unless the admiral is very careful (or has an

overbearing design superiority) he runs the risk of having his own line of battle broken on the turn following that in which he breaks the enemy line — since the enemy is certain to commit the main-body into action at once.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

It is possible to win or lose a battle at the designer's table. This usually results from a failure to make optimal use of certain tricks, such as filling up the USP with token laser, fusion, particle, sand, and repulsor batteries; or from a clear oversight, such as a failure to accord due importance to any one of the factors discussed in these articles. A single type of ship, no matter how well designed, cannot fulfill all of the functions that go into a successful fleet.

— Kevin Connolly

continued from p. 21

eluding the security personnel, and then relying on the false tracers and the group's ability to bluff their way past guards and search parties. One potential hindrance to the group will be Sharon herself, who is rebellious, headstrong, and does doesn't completely comprehend the danger she's in.

If members of the party are caught by the authorities, the penalty they receive will depend upon the crime(s) they have committed. The referee should read the article on Azun for information on this subject. If they escape the arcology without Sharon, or if she is killed, their patron will sign the contract and commit suicide, leaving them without payment and without contacts on Azun.

If the party gets Sharon out, but Wilcox believes that Drannixa can still cause trouble (because the files were not destroyed, or if the referee merely wants to extend the adventure), he may hire the group again to escort his daughter offworld and keep her out of trouble until the problem is settled. In this case, the adventurers can look forward to a whole series of adventures arising from Sharon's irresponsible, headstrong attitudes. It shouldn't be too long before members of the party begin to believe they should have left her in that cell.

— J. Andrew Keith

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Azun

The Solomani Rim is one of the oldest civilized regions in the Imperium (along with the areas of space around Vland and Capital) with Vilani settlements dating back over 5500 years. As the heart of the Terran Confederation and the cultural center of the Second Imperium, the Solomani Rim enjoyed a long era of peace, prosperity, and growth which even the ravages of the Long Night could not extinguish.

As a result, the region contains few unexploited planets; most worlds in this rimward bastion of the Imperium are technologically advanced, rich in history and culture . . . and heavily populated. These factors have had an enormous influence on the development of various worlds in the area, and have sparked some unusual cultural adaptations that are quite interesting. Of the many worlds within the Solomani Rim, the planet Azun presents one of the most fascinating examples of how human beings can adapt to unusual environments and situations.

Azun is a planet in the Ultima subsector of the Solomani Rim (Ultima 0809), with a UPP of B-476ABC-B. With its population of some 26 billion persons and its industrial trade classification, the planet is clearly a thoroughly developed world. A closer look at some particulars of the planet will clarify the problems of life there.

With a diameter of about 6400 km (4000 miles), Azun has a total surface area of 128,700,000 square kilometers. Approximately 60% of the world's surface is covered by water, making the land surface area equal to around 51,200,000 square kilometers. If the

population of 26 billion were to be spread evenly over this area, the population density would be nearly 508 persons per square kilometer, roughly equivalent to having the entire world as densely populated as the Netherlands on late 20th century Earth. This is a generally impractical situation; it has been solved on Azun by the adoption of a highly specialized form of space-saver . . . the arcology.

An arcology is a completely self-contained city built onto a tiny tract of land. On Azun, these are soaring towers three kilometers high, springing from square bases two kilometers on a side. Such "cities" can comfortably house populations in excess of 1,500,000 persons, including not only living space but also nearly every other facet essential for life to flourish. Each such city thus covers only 4 square kilometers of land surface, concentrating the population in a very small area. Therefore, the majority of the land area of Azun can be used for other purposes, including areas for resource exploitation, agriculture, and wilderness reserve.

ARCOLOGY DESIGN

A typical Azunian arcology is designed to make the most of available space, while simultaneously presenting an aesthetically pleasing design. The lower third of the structure generally contains four or more "legs" spread out to stabilize the structure; these extend almost one kilometer in each direction, and are about a quarter of a kilometer thick. The legs come together in a central core which extends all the way up through the structure.

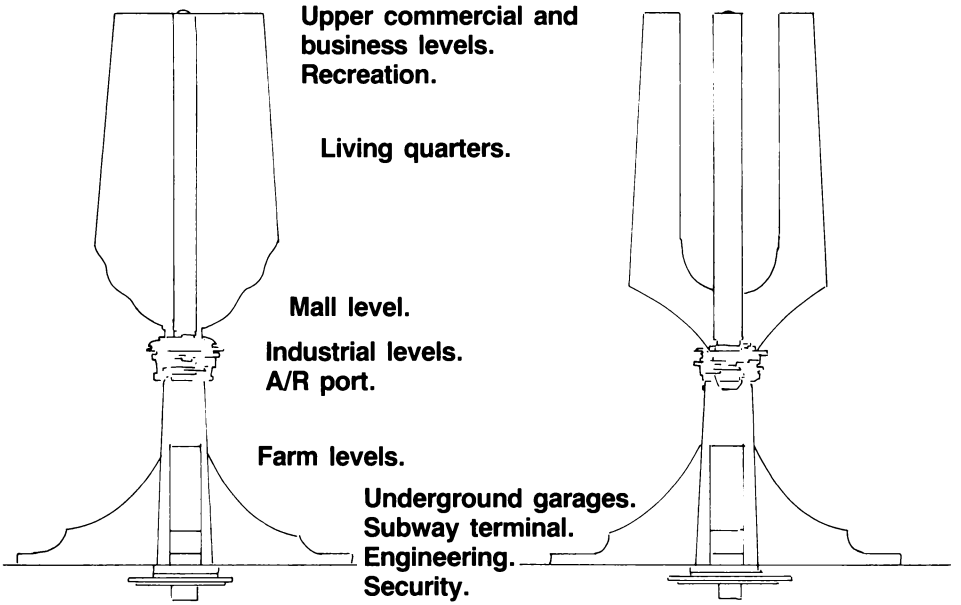
This base section is generally given over to agriculture, in the form of large hydroponics gardens and yeast processing facilities which can produce an amazing variety of meals, each distinctively flavored and shaped, but all derived from inside the arcology — a factor which serves to greatly increase each individual city's self-sufficiency.

Below the ground, under this base, are several levels devoted to the maintenance and engineering needs of the community. Fusion power plants, maintenance tunnels, underground equipment and vehicle storage, and other city functions are based here. An underground terminus for a subterranean transport system, which links the arcologies with one another, is also present beneath the core structure of the tower. Elevators allow access from the terminus to the rest of the city.

Above the base of the tower, the structure narrows somewhat. The middle third of the structure contains industrial levels of various types. A large hangar area allows access by grav vehicles which bring raw materials in, and transport finished goods to other cities. There is also some housing in these levels, primarily reserved for those individuals and families directly connected with manufacturing work who do not wish to "commute."

The next portion of the structure, at the point where the building begins once again to flare out, is usually a vast mall, with various offshoots. The commercial heart of the arcology is here; shops, stores, and businesses of all kinds are based in this portion of the arcology. The mall itself is a multi-story open area surrounding the central shaft. Further out are several floors which open off the mall proper. All these areas contain a variety of commercial concerns in one central location, convenient to the entire population of the city.

Most arcologies on Azun have an interesting feature which appears at this level of the construction. The tower widens considerably into a structure with a distinctly rectangular cross section; on either side of this, two separate



towers flare out to rise independent of the main structure. These towers are mostly given over to housing, with the vast majority of the populace living in these portions of the gigantic complex. Each family in the city has a spacious domicile, containing a number of rooms along the lines of a contemporary Earth apartment or condominium. Large families can take up two or more adjacent domiciles, if needed. There are some major differences between these dwelling areas and their Earthly forerunners, but the overall effect is much the same.

None of the apartments, even those on the outer walls of the structure, have windows; instead, all have panoramic viewscreens which can be adjusted to give a variety of different views according to the tastes of the occupants. Each is also linked to the complex by video communications and pneumatic delivery tubes.

The uppermost levels of the arcology are given over to recreational areas, plus a few additional shops and other assorted places residents can visit for relaxation. A number of different gymnasiums, swimming pools, playing courts and fields, and other such facilities are provided. On the roof of the building, beneath a transparent dome, there are more such facilities: in the available space in the arcology's base.

Each arcology is thoroughly interconnected by elevators, with moving slidewalks linking distant points on each floor. There are also a few shafts running both horizontally and vertically throughout the building which contain large transport modules equipped with seats, used mostly by individuals unable or unwilling to walk extensively on prolonged trips. The citizenry in general have no access to personal transportation; air/rafts and other vehicles on Azun are owned by government or corporate bodies, while the populace relies exclusively on various mass-transit systems.

Arcologies on Azun are completely enclosed, self-contained environments, since the planetary atmosphere is

tainted. Various unusual concentrations of chemicals in the atmosphere make it dangerous to breathe for long periods of time. This, in fact, was one of the primary reasons why arcologies have always been used on Azun, since the early colonization efforts were aided by the design philosophy of concentrating all of the colony in a relatively small space. Keeping the entire city in a single building (albeit a large one) was and is an excellent way to counter the unfriendly environment of the world.

SOCIETY ON AZUN

When over a million people are crowded into the relatively small confines of an arcology, drastic social and cultural changes are bound to take place. The society which has developed on this world has many unique features which have a profound impact on the lives not only of the inhabitants, but of those who choose to visit Azun as well.

Arcology living has fostered a certain attitude which rejects privacy and encourages gregarious behavior. Outsiders often liken the arcology evironment to communal insect nests, teeming with workers, warriors, and other specialized castes who maintain the life of the "hive." Though this is far from accurate, it is certain that arcology dwellers on Azun are anything but uncomfortable in the presence of crowds. By and large, they will tend to be an insular people, somewhat hostile to outsiders, but quite friendly to others of their own society. Privacy is treasured, but not in the same ways that people of less rigid cultures understand the concept.

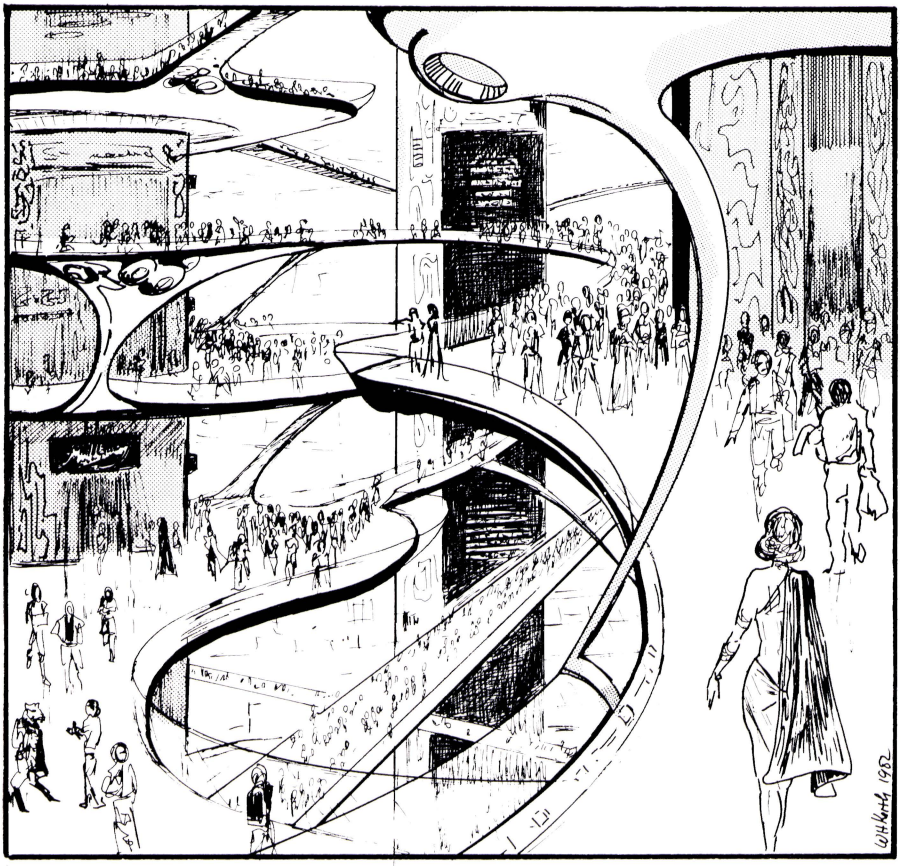
In point of fact, there is very little privacy in the arcology environment, particularly under Azun's restrictive government and laws. The people of Azun, however, have nothing to compare their condition to; surveillance and monitoring are a part of their daily life. But people in Azun's arcologies do have a very high regard for elements of personal privacy. It is virtually unthinkable for people to force their company on others, for example; people are generally quiet, reserved, and well-mannered at all times. This is a sort of self-reinforcing psychological trait, fostered by the general need of the people in the crowded arcology environment to hold onto their own individual identities. Rudeness, loudness, and the like are far more noticeable in a crowded situation, and cause more discomfort; therefore traits of this kind have gradually become "contra-survival" and have all but died out.

One result of this process has been the development of a slight but noticeable difference which divides the Azunian citizen from the outside visitor. It is quite easy to spot a stranger, just from his whole bearing and attitude, even among the crowds of an arcology mall.

THE GOVERNMENT OF AZUN

With a population of over 26 billion people, Azun is not an easy world to govern. In fact, it has long since been proven that efficient government on a planetary scale is virtually impossible on Azun; most administrative and governmental functions are thus concentrated at a local level, with individual arcologies generally answerable for their own internal affairs. Various cities get together to consult on matters involving common interests, but, in general, higher levels of government are not necessary.

Individual city governments vary somewhat from one to another. Certain basic facts, however, channel most cities in the same general direction. The arcology is a fragile, artificial environment; a single interruption in local services can result in a catastrophe affecting over a million people at a time. Hence authority tends to concentrate in the hands of specific individuals.



Democratic and oligarchic governmental forms generally fail because decisions are too difficult to reach; administration by bureaucracy is impractical, because of a definite need for centralized decision making. Thus each individual city usually gravitates towards the general concept of one-man rule. This individual is generally selected from the ranks of the technical and administrative elite who keep city services running, with little or no reference to the citizenry as a whole. Usually titled Chief Administrator, City Manager, or Mayor, such individuals have broad authority in all matters relating to the government and security of their individual arcologies.

Laws on Azun are extremely strict. The fragile nature of the arcology environment calls for tight security systems throughout the city. Camera surveillance is almost constant throughout the arcology; security personnel monitor activities from a central security center in the underground portion of the complex. Even private residences are equipped with cameras, though it takes an emergency signal from the domicile or a special executive order to allow this final barrier of privacy to be breeched.

Visitors and residents are also monitored in another way: each can be constantly traced and located at any time. Tracers are issued in visitor badges for outsiders; residents, however, have a small subcutaneous implant in their upper left arm which serves both as a

tracing device and a permanent ID. The computers in each complex can register the location of any person anywhere in the complex; other refinements allow specific areas to be kept off limits to any individual not wearing a specifically authorized tracer. Because of this system, it is extremely difficult for anyone to move around without the knowledge of complex security officers. This makes illegal activity within an arcology almost impossible (although ways of evading the system, for short periods of time, are possible — it is impossible to watch every individual in a city every minute of the day).

The stringent laws in Azun's arcologies are for the most part directed at preserving the fragile environment of the building complexes. Property damage and threats to the hydroponics or power centers are the most serious crimes. By and large, security personnel are more friendly than otherwise to the residents, who bestow great trust and respect on their police forces. It is different for outsiders, who are regarded with misgivings, especially in times of uncertainty or danger. Such an attitude is certainly understandable, if not entirely forgivable, when incidents such as the Halizar Plague of 1088 are taken into account. In that year, an undiagnosed case of Catanian White Fever, carried into the arcology of Halizar, started an epidemic that killed 290,000 before it was finally isolated and controlled. Though accidental, this crisis reinforced the latent xenophobia which characterizes Azun.

OTHER MATTERS OF INTEREST

Although Azun has an extremely large population, it would be a mistake to describe it as being completely built-up. Because of the conservation of space and resources made possible by the huge arcology complexes, much of the world is in a natural state.

Some of this land is, of course, taken up by mines and other resource exploitation facilities. In many cases, however, there are still large wilderness reserves, untapped and rarely visited. The tainted atmosphere and overall psychological profile of the average inhabitant of Azun makes outdoor activities of any kind, and especially wilderness excursions, very much the exception rather than the rule.

This is not, however, universally true. A certain percentage of any population is always discontented, or at least nonconformist. On Azun, there are a certain number of people who find the arcologies confining, and who seek to carve out an existance outside the sheltering walls. This population is increased on occasion by the arcology governments themselves, which sometimes impose the punishment of exile upon persons who violate certain laws and regulations (usually those associated with threats to the ecological balance of an arcology). There are a few small communities of such malcontents and exiles who carve out a precarious existence in the wilderness of Azun, hampered by the tainted atmosphere and forced to make do without much in the way of sophisticated technology. Many dreamers within the arcologies see these communities as utopian cultures, harking back to primitive roots, and rejecting the technological dependence of the towering cities. They seldom realize that life in these utopias tends to be dangerous, harsh, and short.

Nor are the various arcologies completely identical. The descriptions in this article have been concerned with the most typical structures; there are, however, others — some larger, some smaller, and many of different designs. The politics and government found within these small cities vary also. There are many instances of fierce rivalry and competition between arcologies, usually in the form of trade wars. It has not been unknown for arcologies to carry out limited acts of sabotage against rivals to gain some economic or political edge. Such sabotage is generally limited in nature — it is simply not considered proper to damage any system essential to the survival of the populace, and acts of violence against individuals are very much frowned upon.

Offworld contact with Azun is filtered through an orbital class B starport which is maintained by contributions from all the city complexes. Shuttles carry passengers from the starport down to various cities, according to set schedules; each city generally is visited by a starport shuttle once each day. Trade with offworld interests is one of the major areas of inter-city competition.

ADVENTURING ON AZUN

Because life within the arcology environment is so subject to the ever-present eyes of city security, the adventurer on Azun faces many hazards. Though monitoring is not constant, it takes a bold individual to risk actions of a questionable nature.

Most adventures in this setting will probably involve the characters in one of the rivalries between cities. With the sponsorship of a city government, the adventurers have a chance to beat the security measures of the target city. Such adventurers might involve industrial espionage or sabotage. Careful measures to avoid disrupting the fragile life support systems that keep the arcologies running will be of great concern, for such a crime is punishable by very severe measures indeed.

Those adventurers who prefer "private enterprise" would be well advised to proceed with care and caution. It may be possible to bribe security per sonnel in order to obtain different tracers or gain access to areas normally off-limits, but such bribery can easily backfire. Law enforcement in this sort of setting is extremely efficient, and adventurers who habitually break the law will find Azun an unpleasant place. Most undertakings should be of a non-violent kind — confidence games, scams, and other subtle activities that won't be instantly betrayed to security personnel — and which take advantage of the huge

population density concentrated in the arcology setting.

Finally, adventures outside the arcologies can also be run. Dangers from the planetary environment, and from the occasional band of arcology outcasts, can allow groups to work in areas more familiar to them than the unusual world that exists within the three-kilometer towers. These types of adventures should not be the only kind run on Azun, or other worlds of this kind (there isn't much use in creating an arcology-based society if the adventure isn't going to make use of it), but they offer a familiar point of reference if players find it difficult to understand what they're up against inside the towering cities.

This article, of course is only the beginning. Referees will want to fill in other areas, deliberately left vague here, to provide for interesting adventure situations. Think of this material as a canvas, upon which you, as referee, can paint a complete adventure. The soaring towers of Azun await!

— *J. Andrew Keith with Marc Miller*

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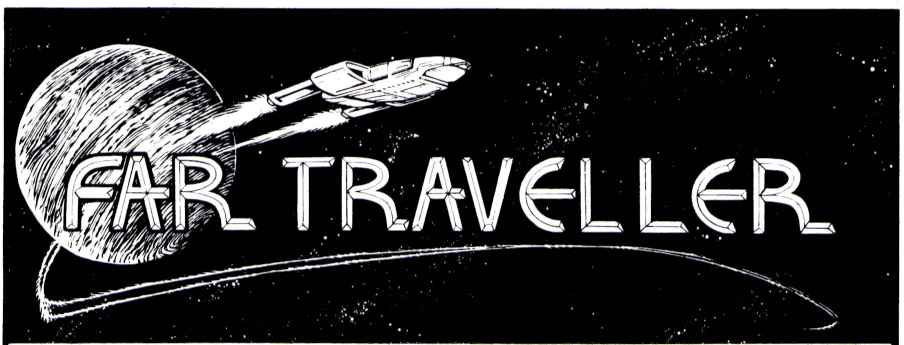
to convert it to a permanent repair.

A dash indicates a permanent repair cannot be achieved with the equipment available on board. A temporary repair will last only one jump, at which time another may be attempted.

— *Loren Wiseman & Marc Miller*



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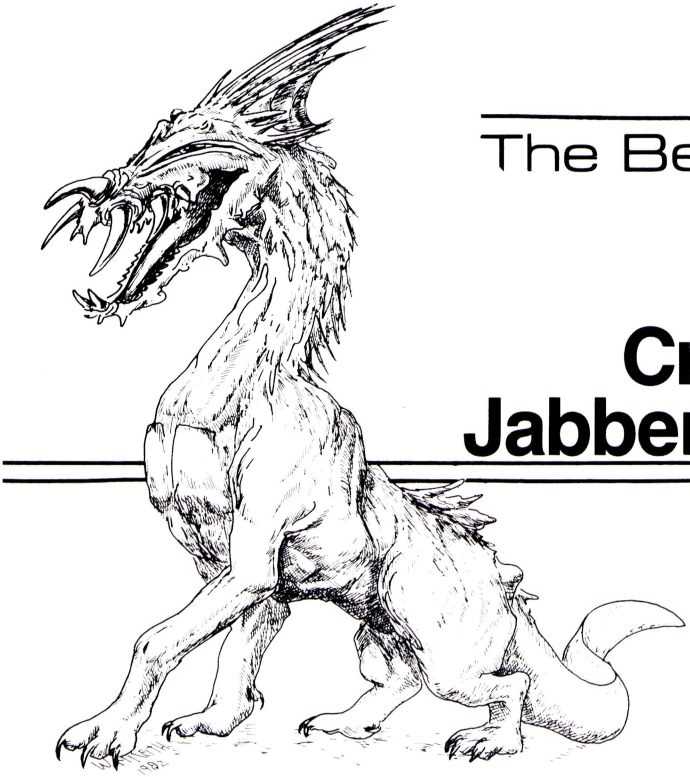


Crested Jabberwock

Crested Jabberwock
(Jabberwockiscristatus saevitia)

Sometimes called the nightclaw, or the fanged death, the Crested Jabberwock is a medium-sized carnivore native to Kassan (Vega 0101 A-785757-E) in the Solomani Rim. Only a few members of the species have been transported offworld.

Fully grown Jabberwocks mass about 400 kgs. They are bilaterally symmetrical, homeothermic quadrupeds, standing about 1.2 meters tall at the shoulder and measuring some 2.6 meters in length. Their anatomy is unusual in that the animal has four two-chambered hearts.

The Crested Jabberwock is noted for its magnificent, multi-colored crest, which is used in displays of territorial aggression and courtship. This gorgeous crest is highly prized by hunters and trophy collectors throughout the Solomani Rim, and have made the animal a highly prized and much-sought-after target. In as much as the Crested Jabberwock is one of the most aggressive carnivores known in modern exobiology (they have been known to attack prey five times their size), the challenge of Jabberwock hunting has long been considered the ultimate proof of courage and skill in some circles.

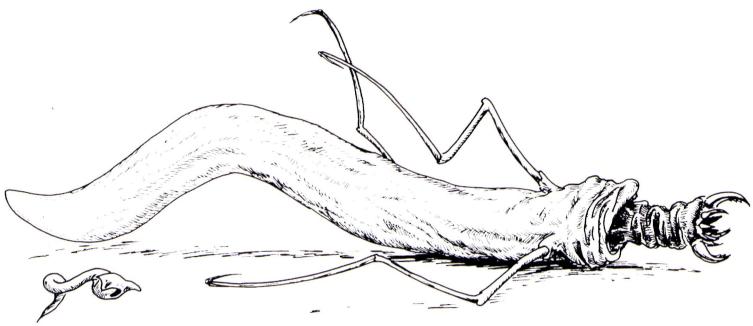
The Crested Jabberwock, unfortunately, has not proved a match for the inevitable march of civilization. Over the centuries, the inhabitants of Kasaan have sought to extend the world's agricultural production into new areas; they have ruthlessly sought to eliminate

the carnivore to protect fields and livestock. This, even more than the depredations of trophy hunters, has caused a massive decline in numbers. The species was recently placed upon the endangered species list maintained by the Pan-Galactic Friends of Life, which organization has set out to protect the Crested Jabberwock from further decline. Their efforts have been quite successful to date, with the establishment of wilderness preserves on Kasaan and the passage of strict laws against very dangerous task). Finally, an organization such as the Pan-Galactic Friends of Life may hire the adventurers to look into violations of the Jabberwock protection laws.

Jabberwock hunting being among the most important triumphs achieved.

A solitary hunter, the Jabberwock stakes out a territorial claim over an area several kilometers square, and tolerates others of its kind within that area only during a relatively brief rutting season each year. Jabberwocks are ferocious, and kill their prey through a combination of their long slashing claws and sharp fangs. A Jabberwock is rarely satisfied; even when freshly fed, they take great delight in stalking and killing prey.

Adventures can easily be built around this unusual and dangerous creature. Parties might become involved in illegal hunts for the beast (either they personally can decide to hunt it, or they may be hired by a patron who needs an escort for the hunt). They might be attached to a scientific expedition studying the rare carnivore in its natural habitat (a



Doyle's Eel

(Ferrosolvens et al)

Typical of a large number of metal-dissolving species discovered in various parts of the Imperium and its neighbors, Doyle's Eel is a creature which has proved to be at best a nuisance, and at worst a serious danger to ships operating in deep space. Animals of this general type have evolved on many planets independently, and have since spread far and wide as they are carried by the ships they invade and infest.

An adult eel measures approximately one-third of a meter in length, with a diameter averaging ten centimeters. They are hermaphroditic in nature, with all individuals capable of laying eggs. In their natural environments, the eels seek out veins of metal ore in underground

caverns, using a powerful acid secreted from organs located in their ventral surfaces to carve a protected nest into the rock. The eggs are deposited here. The adult remains in the nest until the eggs hatch, after which it usually dies.

The eggs hatch to produce larvae, which require up to a year of nearly constant feeding before they enter a metamorphic stage and emerge as small adults. The adults continue to eat and grow until mating; once the animal lays its eggs and begins standing vigil, it stops eating — eventually starving to death.

Doyle's Eel is a silicon-based life form which ingests metals — especially iron, tin, copper, or zinc. By bathing these metals in acid solutions, they generate a weak electrical current, upon which they live (the exact process is ill-understood, and still under study). They pose a triple danger to humans directly — powerful jaws (which have been known to shear a two centimeter copper tube), a powerful electric jolt, and a strong acid secretion (which has no effect on the eel itself because the various organs which store and secrete these acids are complex "organic ceramics" not affected by the acid).

Their greatest threat to humans, however, is indirect. If an eel should get aboard a ship and lay eggs, that ship can face a severe problem. Once larvae are hatched, these tiny nuisances are likely to get almost anywhere — and have a special desire for silicon, some plastics, and other elements of shipboard electronics, computer, and avionics systems (to build up their body tissue). A ship infested with these creatures will suffer from numerous electrical breakdowns, often at critical points, as the larvae reach sensitive parts of the ship.

Elimination of the larvae from an infested ship is no easy matter. Their biochemical reactions are powered by electricity, not oxidation and they have no need of oxygen. They thrive in all atmosphere types except none, and can live for a surprisingly long time in vacuum. Temperature has little effect, and there are no known poisons that can eliminate them. Several methods are effective against these pests, including salt water, certain acids, and expensive viral diseases, but these do the ship's circuitry little good. Often an infestation ends with a ship given a major overhaul — equivalent in cost and time to three annual maintenance calls in one lump. All of these treatments assume, of course, that the ship makes planetfall.

Doyle's Eel (and similar species) are not usually picked up under routine conditions. Carefully enforced quarantines and cargo inspections have made the chances of picking up an infestation relatively rare in normal commerce. Most often, an infestation takes place as a result of an adult getting on board a ship grounded in a wilderness area on a planet holding such life forms.

Animal		*Weight*	*Hits*	*Armor*	*Wounds & Weapons*				
	Jabberwock	400kg	2/0	Jack	22	Claws & teeth	A3	F9	S2
3D	Doyle's Eel, Larvae	.1kg	4/0	battle	1	as laser rifle	F5	A8	S2
1	Doyle's Eel, Adult	2kg	10/0	battle	15	as laser rifle	F5	A6	S1

Characteristics of such a world generally include a lack of normal carbon-based life forms, or exotic or very little atmospheres. Infestations usually result from prospecting or smuggling activities.

Unlicensed transport of Doyle's Eel or similar creatures is considered negligent transport of a harmful species, and is punishable by fines ranging from Cr100 to Cr10,000 and/or a prison term of 1 to 10 years (depending upon what damage,if any, is done by the animals). Licenses are seldom granted except to reputable scientific institutions, such as zoos, universities, and so on.

— *John Marshal*

continued from p. 15

hesitation side with the wronged party and will work (secretly or openly) on their behalf. These tendencies are strong enough that if they are faced with a direct conflict (if, for instance, their helping exploit a primitive people will greatly benefit their own world financially) they may suffer nervous collapse.

Properly administered, the Ael Yael can add a great deal to a campaign.

— *William H. Keith & J. Andrew Keith*

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SuSAG: An examination of how this megacorporation is organized, how it works, and what it does.

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Marc Miller has been slaving over his trusty terminal, and that means some new **Traveller** items are in the offing. *The Traveller Adventure* (see illustration below) was described in this column last issue: 128 pages of new adventuring material in a hardcover book. The Adventure focuses on the crew of the March Harrier, their Vargr companion, and the secret of a mysterious, jewelled ornament. This book should be in your local shop by the end of July. The other major project is the newest **Traveller** package, the *Starter Edition.* Those of you who cut your teeth on the Basic set may sorrow at its passing, but we expect *The Traveller Book* and the *Starter Edition* to be the most important rules sets. Veterans may covet the art (see illo below), but there is nothing added or altered in the new set except for a slightly simplified movement system for starship combat. The *Starter Edition* should be in retail stores by the time you are reading this.

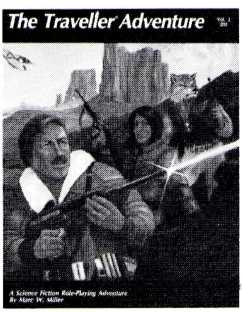
Nomads of the World-Ocean, written by the well-known brothers Keith, is under development by John Harshman. The adventure describes the waterworld Bellerophon and the giant sea-creatures called daghadasi. Adventurers are hired to investigate claims that Seaharvester Corporation is hunting the daghadasi to extinction, threatening worldwide eco-catastrophe. They must contend with the hostile corporation as well as with the Aramakilar nomads. Depending on Mr. Harshman's workload, Nomads could be in shops by the end of March.

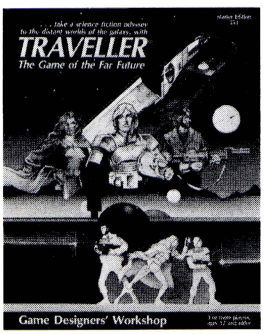
Other **Traveller** projects include *Secret of the Ancients, Safari Ship, Scouts,* and a boxed module companion to the *Starter Edition* due this summer.

On the non-**Traveller** front, *The Brotherhood* has been postponed and is still in Frank Chadwick's hands. An Europa boardgame, *Western Desert,* is scheduled to make its debut in March as an intensive simulation of Rommel in Egypt and Libya, 1940-43.

Four older Series 120 games - *Snapshot, Asteroid, Mayday,* and *Dark Nebula* - are being converted to a new box format with fancy cover art, but no substantive changes. These should all be on the market by April.

There is a new publication from GDW, The Workshop Newsletter. It is published irregularly, but approximately 10 times a year. There is no mailing list and no subscriptions are accepted. Instead, the current issue is always available for a stamped, self-addressed envelope. The Newsletter dispenses news and rumors of activities and projects at GDW.





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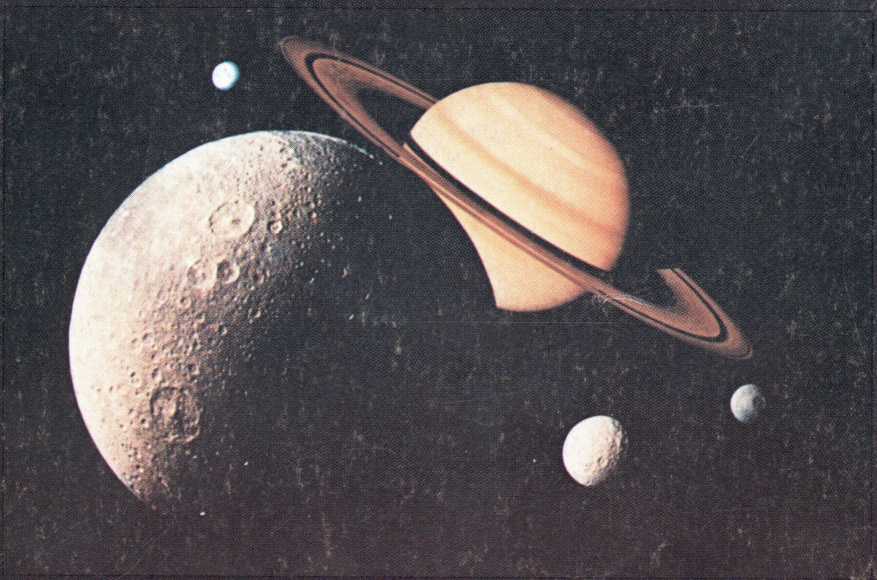

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